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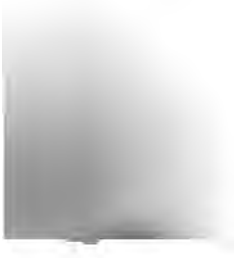

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THE WRITINGS
OF
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH
CRITICAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTIONS
AND NOTES BY EDWIN PERCY WHIPPLE
AND OTHERS

ILLUSTRATED WITH STEEL PORTRAITS AND ENGRAVINGS FROM THE ORIGINAL DESIGNS BY BROWNE, CRUIKSHANK LEECH, AND OTHERS

IN THIRTY-TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME XI

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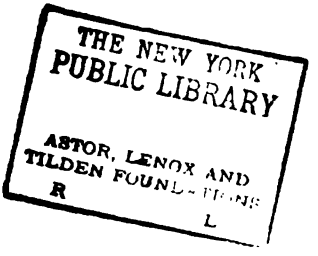
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THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT
AND AMERICAN NOTES

BY

CHARLES DICKENS

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS ON STEEL

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. II

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
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The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.
Electrotyped and Printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.

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The frontispieces are from the original drawings of John Gilbert and F. O C. Darley.

The other illustrations in *Martin Chuzzlewit* were drawn by Hablot K. Browne (Phiz).

The illustrations in *American Notes* were drawn by Marcus Stone.

LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT

CHAPTER XXXII

TREATS OF TODGERS'S AGAIN: AND OF ANOTHER BLIGHTED PLANT BESIDES THE PLANTS UPON THE LEADS.

EARLY on the day next after that on which she bade adieu to the halls of her youth and the scenes of her childhood, Miss Pecksniff, arriving safely at the coach-office in London, was there received, and conducted to her peaceful home beneath the shadow of the Monument, by Mrs. Todgers. M. Todgers looked a little worn by cares of gravy and other such solicitudes arising out of her establishment, but displayed her usual earnestness and warmth of manner.

"And how, my sweet Miss Pecksniff," said she, "how is your princely pa?"

Miss Pecksniff signified (in confidence) that he contemplated the introduction of a princely ma; and repeated the sentiment that she was n't blind, and was n't quite a fool, and would n't bear it.

Mrs. Todgers was more shocked by the intelligence than any one could have expected. She was quite bitter. She said there was no truth in man, and that the warmer he expressed himself, as a general principle, the falser and more treacherous he was. She foresaw with astonishing clearness that the object of Mr. Pecksniff's attachment was designing, worthless, and wicked; and receiving from Charity the fullest confirmation of these views, protested with tears in her eyes that she loved Miss Pecksniff like a sister, and felt her injuries as if they were her own.

"Your real darling sister, I have not seen more than once since her marriage," said Mrs. Todgers, "and then I thought her looking poorly. My sweet Miss Pecksniff, I always thought that you was to be the lady?"

"Oh dear, no!" cried Cherry, shaking her head. "Oh, no, Mrs. Todgers. Thank you. No! not for any consideration he could offer."

"I dare say you are right," said Mrs. Todgers, with a sigh. "I feared it all along. But the misery we have had from that match, here among ourselves, in this house, my dear Miss Pecksniff, nobody would believe."

"Lor, Mrs. Todgers!"

"Awful, awful!" repeated Mrs. Todgers, with strong emphasis. "You recollect our youngest gentleman, my dear?"

"Of course I do," said Cherry.

"You might have observed," said Mrs. Todgers, "how he used to watch your sister; and that a kind of stony dumbness came over him whenever she was in company?"

"I am sure I never saw anything of the sort," said Cherry, in a peevish manner. "What nonsense, Mrs. Todgers!"

"My dear," returned that lady in a hollow voice, "I have seen him again and again, sitting over his pie at dinner, with his spoon a perfect fixture in his mouth, looking at your sister. I have seen him standing in a corner of our drawing-room, gazing at her, in such a lonely, melancholy state, that he was more like a Pump than a man, and might have drawed tears."

"I never saw it!" cried Cherry; "that's all I can say."

"But when the marriage took place," said Mrs. Todgers, proceeding with her subject, "when it was in the paper and was read out here at breakfast, I thought he had taken leave of his senses, I did, indeed. The violence of that young man, my dear Miss Pecksniff; the frightful opinions he expressed upon the subject of self-destruction; the extraordinary actions he performed with his tea; the clenching way in which he bit his bread and butter; the manner in which he taunted Mr. Jinkins, all combined to form a picture never to be forgotten."

"It's a pity he didn't destroy himself, I think," observed Miss Pecksniff.

"Himself!" said Mrs. Todgers; "it took another turn at night. He was for destroying other people then. There was a little chaffing going on—I hope you don't consider that a

low expression, Miss Pecksniff; it is always in our gentlemen's mouths — a little chaffing going on, my dear, among 'em, all in good nature, when suddenly he rose up, foaming with his fury, and but for being held by three, would have had Mr. Jinkins's life with a boot-jack."

Miss Pecksniff's face expressed supreme indifference.

"And now," said Mrs. Todgers, "now he is the meekest of men. You can almost bring the tears into his eyes by looking at him. He sits with me the whole day long on Sundays, talking in such a dismal way that I find it next to impossible to keep my spirits up equal to the accommodation of the boarders. His only comfort is in female society. He takes me half-price to the play, to an extent which I sometimes fear is beyond his means; and I see the tears a standing in his eyes during the whole performance, particularly if it is anything of a comic nature. The turn I experienced only yesterday," said Mrs. Todgers, putting her hand to her side, "when the housemaid threw his bedside carpet out of the window of his room, while I was sitting here, no one can imagine. I thought it was him, and that he had done it at last!"

The contempt with which Miss Charity received this pathetic account of the state to which the youngest gentleman in company was reduced, did not say much for her power of sympathising with that unfortunate character. She treated it with great levity, and went on to inform herself, then and afterwards, whether any other changes had occurred in the Commercial Boarding-House.

Mr. Bailey was gone, and had been succeeded (such is the irony of human greatness!) by an old woman whose name was reported to be Tamaroo — which seemed an impossibility. Indeed it appeared in the fulness of time that the jocular boarders had appropriated the word from an English ballad, in which it was supposed to express the bold and fiery nature of a certain Hackney-coachman; and that it was bestowed upon Mr. Bailey's successor by reason of her having nothing fiery about her, except an occasional attack of that fire which is called St. Anthony's. This ancient female had been engaged, in fulfilment of a vow, registered by Mrs. Todgers, that no more boys should darken the Commercial doors; and she was chiefly remarkable for a total absence of all comprehension upon every subject whatever. She was a perfect Tomb for messages and small par-

cels; and when despatched to the Post Office with letters, had been frequently seen endeavouring to insinuate them into casual chinks in private doors, under the delusion that any door with a hole in it would answer the purpose. She was a very little old woman, and always wore a very coarse apron with a bib before and a loop behind, together with bandages on her wrists, which appeared to be afflicted with an everlasting sprain. She was on all occasions chary of opening the street-door, and ardent to shut it again; and she waited at table in a bonnet.

This was the only great change over and above the change which had fallen on the youngest gentleman. As for him, he more than corroborated the account of Mrs. Todgers; possessing greater sensibility than even she had given him credit for. He entertained some terrible notions of Destiny, among other matters, and talked much about people's "Missions;" upon which he seemed to have some private information not generally attainable, as he knew it had been poor Merry's mission to crush him in the bud. He was very frail, and tearful; for being aware that a shepherd's mission was to pipe to his flocks, and that a boatswain's mission was to pipe all hands, and that one man's mission was to be a paid piper, and another man's mission was to pay the piper, so he had got it into his head that his own peculiar mission was to pipe his eye; which he did perpetually.

He often informed Mrs. Todgers that the sun had set upon him; that the billows had rolled over him; that the Car of Juggernaut had crushed him; and also that the deadly Upas-tree of Java had blighted him. His name was Moddle.

Towards this most unhappy Moddle, Miss Pecksniff conducted herself at first with distant haughtiness, being in no humour to be entertained with dirges in honour of her married sister. The poor young gentleman was additionally crushed by this, and remonstrated with Mrs. Todgers on the subject.

"Even she turns from me, Mrs. Todgers," said Moddle.

"Then, why don't you try and be a little bit more cheerful, sir?" retorted Mrs. Todgers.

"Cheerful, Mrs. Todgers! cheerful!" cried the youngest gentleman; "when she reminds me of days for ever fled, Mrs. Todgers!"

"Then you had better avoid her for a short time, if she does," said Mrs. Todgers, "and come to know her again, by degrees. That 's my advice."

"But I can't avoid her," replied Moddle. "I have n't strength of mind to do it. Oh, Mrs. Todgers, if you knew what a comfort her nose is to me!"

"Her nose, sir!" Mrs. Todgers cried.

"Her profile, in general," said the youngest gentleman, "but particularly her nose. It 's so like" — here he yielded to a burst of grief — "it 's so like hers who is Another's, Mrs. Todgers!"

The observant matron did not fail to report this conversation to Charity, who laughed at the time, but treated Mr. Moddle that very evening with increased consideration, and presented her side-face to him as much as possible. Mr. Moddle was not less sentimental than usual; was rather more so, if anything; but he sat and stared at her with glistening eyes, and seemed grateful.

"Well, sir!" said the lady of the Boarding-House next day, "you held up your head last night. You 're coming round, I think."

"Only because she 's so like her who is Another's, Mrs. Todgers," rejoined the youth. "When she talks, and when she smiles, I think I 'm looking on HER brow again, Mrs. Todgers."

This was likewise carried to Charity, who talked and smiled next evening in her most engaging manner, and, rallying Mr. Moddle on the lowness of his spirits, challenged him to play a rubber at cribbage. Mr. Moddle taking up the gauntlet, they played several rubbers for sixpences, and Charity won them all. This may have been partially attributable to the gallantry of the youngest gentleman, but it was certainly referable to the state of his feelings also; for his eyes being frequently dimmed by tears, he thought that aces were tens, and knaves queens, which at times occasioned some confusion in his play.

On the seventh night of cribbage, when Mrs. Todgers, sitting by, proposed that instead of gambling they should play for "love," Mr. Moddle was seen to change colour. On the fourteenth night, he kissed Miss Pecksniff's snuffers, in the passage, when she went up stairs to bed, meaning to have kissed her hand, but missing it.

In short, Mr. Moddle began to be impressed with the idea that Miss Pecksniff's mission was to comfort him; and Miss Pecksniff began to speculate on the probability of its being her mission to become ultimately Mrs. Moddle. He was a young

gentleman (Miss Pecksniff was not a very young lady) with rising prospects, and "almost" enough to live on. Really it looked very well.

Besides — besides — he had been regarded as devoted to Merry. Merry had joked about him, and had once spoken of it to her sister as a conquest. He was better looking, better shaped, better spoken, better tempered, better mannered than Jonas. He was easy to manage, could be made to consult the humours of his Betrothed, and could be shown off like a lamb when Jonas was a bear. There was the rub!

In the mean time the cribbage went on, and Mrs. Todgers went off; for the youngest gentleman, dropping her society, began to take Miss Pecksniff to the play. He also began, as Mrs. Todgers said, to slip home "in his dinner-times," and to get away from "the office" at unholy seasons; and twice, as he informed Mrs. Todgers himself, he received anonymous letters, inclosing cards from Furniture Warehouses — clearly the act of that ungentlemanly ruffian Jinkins; only he had n't evidence enough to call him out upon. All of which, so Mrs. Todgers told Miss Pecksniff, spoke as plain English as the shining sun.

"My dear Miss Pecksniff, you may depend upon it," said Mrs. Todgers, "that he is burning to propose."

"My goodness me, why don't he then!" cried Cherry.

"Men are so much more timid than we think 'em, my dear," returned Mrs. Todgers. "They baulk themselves continually. I saw the words on Todgers's lips for months and months and months before he said 'em."

Miss Pecksniff submitted that Todgers might not have been a fair specimen.

"Oh, yes, he was. Oh, bless you, yes, my dear. I was very particular in those days, I assure you," said Mrs. Todgers bridling. "No, no. You give Mr. Moddle a little encouragement, Miss Pecksniff, if you wish him to speak; and he 'll speak fast enough, depend upon it."

"I am sure I don't know what encouragement he would have, Mrs. Todgers," returned Charity. "He walks with me, and plays cards with me, and he comes and sits alone with me."

"Quite right," said Mrs. Todgers. "That 's indispensable, my dear."

"And he sits very close to me."

"Also quite correct," said Mrs. Todgers.

"And he looks at me."

"To be sure he does," said Mrs. Todgers.

"And he has his arm upon the back of the chair or sofa, or whatever it is — behind me, you know."

"*I* should think so," said Mrs. Todgers.

"And then he begins to cry!"

Mrs. Todgers admitted that he might do better than that; and might undoubtedly profit by the recollection of the great Lord Nelson's signal at the battle of Trafalgar. Still, she said, he would come round, or, not to mince the matter, would be brought round, if Miss Pecksniff took up a decided position, and plainly showed him that it must be done.

Determining to regulate her conduct by this opinion, the young lady received Mr. Moddle, on the earliest subsequent occasion, with an air of constraint; and gradually leading him to inquire, in a dejected manner, why she was so changed, confessed to him that she felt it necessary for their mutual peace and happiness to take a decided step. They had been much together lately, she observed, much together, and had tasted the sweets of a genuine reciprocity of sentiment. She never could forget him, nor could she ever cease to think of him with feelings of the liveliest friendship; but people had begun to talk, the thing had been observed, and it was necessary that they should be nothing more to each other than any gentleman and lady in society usually are. She was glad she had had the resolution to say thus much before her feelings had been tried too far; they had been greatly tried, she would admit; but though she was weak and silly, she would soon get the better of it, she hoped.

Moddle, who had by this time become in the last degree maudlin, and who wept abundantly, inferred from the foregoing avowal that it was his mission to communicate to others the blight which had fallen on himself; and that, being a kind of unintentional Vampire, he had had Miss Pecksniff assigned to him by the Fates, as Victim Number One. Miss Pecksniff controverting this opinion as sinful, Moddle was goaded on to ask whether she could be contented with a blighted heart; and it appearing on further examination that she could be, plighted his dismal troth, which was accepted and returned.

He bore his good-fortune with the utmost moderation. In-

stead of being triumphant, he shed more tears than he had ever been known to shed before; and, sobbing, said: —

"Oh, what a day this has been! I can't go back to the office this afternoon. Oh, what a trying day this has been! Good Gracious!"

CHAPTER XXXIII

FURTHER PROCEEDINGS IN EDEN, AND A PROCEEDING OUT OF IT: MARTIN MAKES A DISCOVERY OF SOME IMPORTANCE.

FROM Mr. Moddle to Eden is an easy and natural transition. Mr. Moddle, living in the atmosphere of Miss Pecksniff's love, dwelt (if he had but known it) in a terrestrial Paradise. The thriving city of Eden was also a terrestrial Paradise, upon the showing of its proprietors. The beautiful Miss Pecksniff might have been poetically described as a something too good for man in his fallen and degraded state. That was exactly the character of the thriving city of Eden, as poetically heightened by Zephaniah Scadder, General Choke, and other worthies; part and parcel of the talons of that great American Eagle, which is always airing itself sky-high in purest ether, and never, no never, never, tumbles down, with draggled wings, into the mud.

When Mark Tapley, leaving Martin in the architectural and surveying offices, had effectually strengthened and encouraged his own spirits by the contemplation of their joint misfortunes, he proceeded, with new cheerfulness, in search of help; congratulating himself, as he went along, on the enviable position to which he had at last attained.

"I used to think, sometimes," said Mr. Tapley, "as a desolate island would suit me, but I should only have had myself to provide for there, and being naterally a easy man to manage, there would n't have been much credit in *that*. Now here I 've got my partner to take care on, and he 's something like the sort of man for the purpose. I want a man as is always a sliding off his legs when he ought to be on 'em. I want a man as is so low down in the school of life that he 's always a making figures of one in his copy-book, and can't get no further. I want a man as is his own great-coat and cloak, and is always a wrapping himself up in himself. And I have got him, too," said Mr. Tapley, after a moment's silence. "What a happiness!"

He paused to look round, uncertain to which of the log-houses he should repair.

"I don't know which to take," he observed; "that 's the truth. They 're equally prepossessing outside, and equally commodious, no doubt, within; being fitted up with every convenience that a Alligator, in a state of natur', could possibly require. Let me see! The citizen as turned out last night lives under water, in the right hand dog-kennel at the corner. I don't want to trouble him if I can help it, poor man, for he is a melancholy object; a reg'lar Settler in every respect. There 's a house with a winder, but I 'm afraid of their being proud. I don't know whether a door ain't too aristocratic; but here goes for the first one!"

He went up to the nearest cabin, and knocked with his hand. Being desired to enter, he complied.

"Neighbour," said Mark — "for I *am* a neighbour, though you don't know me — I 've come a begging. Hallo! hal—lo! — Am I abed, and dreaming!"

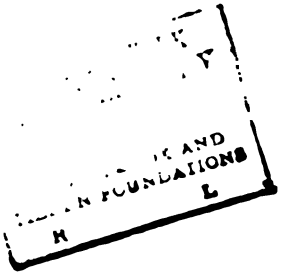
He made this exclamation on hearing his own name pronounced, and finding himself clasped about the skirts by two little boys, whose faces he had often washed, and whose suppers he had often cooked, on board of that noble and fast-sailing line-of-packet ship, the Screw.

"My eyes is wrong!" said Mark. "I don't believe 'em. That ain't my fellow passenger yonder, a nursing her little girl, who, I am sorry to see, is so delicate; and that ain't her husband as come to New York to fetch her. Nor these," he added, looking down upon the boys, "ain't them two young shavers as was so familiar to me; though they are uncommon like 'em. That I must confess."

The woman shed tears, in very joy to see him; the man shook both his hands, and would not let them go; the two boys hugged his legs; the sick child, in the mother's arms, stretched out her burning little fingers, and muttered, in her hoarse, dry throat, his well-remembered name.

It was the same family, sure enough, — altered by the salubrious air of Eden, but the same.

"This is a new sort of a morning call," said Mark, drawing a long breath. "It strikes one all of a heap. Wait a little bit! I 'm a coming round, fast. That 'll do! These gentlemen ain't my friends. Are they on the wisiting list of the house?"


AND
FOUNDATIONS

The inquiry referred to certain gaunt pigs, who had walked in after him, and were much interested in the heels of the family. As they did not belong to the mansion, they were expelled by the two little boys.

"I ain't superstitious about toads," said Mark, looking round the room, "but if you could prevail upon the two or three I see in company to step out at the same time, my young friends, I think they'd find the open air refreshing. Not that I at all object to 'em. A very handsome animal is a toad," said Mr. Tapley, sitting down upon a stool; "very spotted; very like a particklar style of old gentleman about the throat; very bright-eyed, very cool, and very slippy. But one sees 'em to the best advantage out of doors, perhaps."

While pretending, with such talk as this, to be perfectly at his ease, and to be the most indifferent and careless of men, Mark Tapley had an eye on all around him. The wan and meagre aspect of the family, the changed looks of the poor mother, the fevered child she held in her lap, the air of great despondency and little hope on everything, were plain to him, and made a deep impression on his mind. He saw it all as clearly and as quickly as with his bodily eyes he saw the rough shelves supported by pegs driven between the logs of which the house was made; the flour-cask in the corner, serving also for a table; the blankets, spades, and other articles against the walls; the damp that blotched the ground; or the crop of vegetable rottenness in every crevice of the hut.

"How is it that you have come here?" asked the man, when their first expressions of surprise were over.

"Why, we come by the steamer last night," replied Mark. "Our intention is to make our fortunes with punctuality and dispatch; and to retire upon our property as soon as ever it's realised. But how are you all? You're looking noble!"

"We are but sickly now," said the poor woman, bending over her child. "But we shall do better when we are seasoned to the place."

"There are some here," thought Mark, "whose seasoning will last for ever."

But he said cheerfully, "Do better! To be sure you will. We shall all do better. What we've got to do is to keep up our spirits, and be neighbourly. We shall come all right in the end, never fear. That reminds me, by the bye, that my

partner's all wrong just at present; and that I looked in to beg for him. I wish you'd come and give me your opinion of him, master."

That must have been a very unreasonable request on the part of Mark Tapley, with which, in their gratitude for his kind offices on board the ship, they would not have complied instantly. The man rose to accompany him without a moment's delay. Before they went, Mark took the sick child in his arms, and tried to comfort the mother; but the hand of death was on it then, he saw.

They found Martin in the house, lying wrapped up in his blanket on the ground. He was, to all appearance, very ill indeed, and shook and shivered horribly; not as people do from cold, but in a frightful kind of spasm or convulsion that racked his whole body. Mark's friend pronounced his disease an aggravated kind of fever, accompanied with ague; which was very common in those parts, and which he predicted would be worse to-morrow, and for many more to-morrows. He had had it himself off and on, he said, for a couple of years or so; but he was thankful that, while so many he had known had died about him, he had escaped with life.

"And with not too much of that," thought Mark, surveying his emaciated form. "Eden for ever!"

They had some medicine in their chest; and this man of sad experience showed Mark how and when to administer it, and how he could best alleviate the sufferings of Martin. His attentions did not stop there; for he was backwards and forwards constantly, and rendered Mark good service in all his brisk attempts to make their situation more endurable. Hope or comfort for the future he could not bestow. The season was a sickly one; the settlement a grave. His child died that night; and Mark, keeping the secret from Martin, helped to bury it, beneath a tree, next day.

With all his various duties of attendance upon Martin (who became the more exacting in his claims, the worse he grew), Mark worked out of doors, early and late; and with the assistance of his friend and others, laboured to do something with their land. Not that he had the least strength of heart or hope, or steady purpose in so doing, beyond the habitual cheerfulness of his disposition, and his amazing power of self-sustainment; for within himself, he looked on their condition as

beyond all hope, and in his own words, "came out strong" in consequence.

"As to coming out as strong as I could wish, sir," he confided to Martin in a leisure moment, that is to say, one evening, while he was washing the linen of the establishment, after a hard day's work, "that I give up. It's a piece of good fortune as never is to happen to me, I see!"

"Would you wish for circumstances stronger than these?" Martin retorted with a groan, from underneath his blanket.

"Why, only see how easy they might have been stronger, sir," said Mark, "if it was n't for the envy of that uncommon fortune of mine, which is always after me, and tripping me up. The night we landed here, I thought things did look pretty jolly. I won't deny it. I thought they did look pretty jolly."

"How do they look now?" groaned Martin.

"Ah!" said Mark, "ah, to be sure. That's the question. How do they look now! On the very first morning of my going out, what do I do? Stumble on a family I know, who are constantly assisting of us in all sorts of ways, from that time to this! That won't do, you know; that ain't what I'd a right to expect. If I had stumbled on a serpent, and got bit; or stumbled on a first-rate patriot, and got bowie-knifed; or stumbled on a lot of Sympathisers with inverted shirt-collars, and got made a lion of, I might have distinguished myself, and earned some credit. As it is, the great object of my voyage is knocked on the head. So it would be, wherever I went. How do you feel to-night, sir?"

"Worse than ever," said poor Martin.

"That's something," returned Mark, "but not enough. Nothing but being very bad myself, and jolly to the last, will ever do me justice."

"In Heaven's name, don't talk of that," said Martin, with a thrill of terror. "What should I do, Mark, if you were taken ill?"

Mr. Tapley's spirits appeared to be stimulated by this remark, although it was not a very flattering one. He proceeded with his washing in a brighter mood; and observed "that his chance was a rising."

"There 's one good thing in this place, sir," said Mr. Tapley, scrubbing away at the linen, "as disposes me to be jolly; and that is, that it 's a reg'lar little United States in itself. There 's

two or three American settlers left; and they coddle everyone, even here, sir, as if it was the wholesomest and loveliest spot in the world. But they're like the cock that went and hid himself to save his life, and was found out by the noise he made. They can't help crowing. They was born to do it, and do it they must, whatever comes of it."

Glancing from his work, out at the door, as he said these words, Mark's eyes encountered a lean person in a blue frock and a straw hat, with a short black pipe in his mouth, and a great hickory stick, studded all over with knots, in his hand; who smoking and chewing as he came along, and spitting frequently, recorded his progress by a train of decomposed tobacco on the ground.

"Here's one on 'em," cried Mark, "Hannibal Chollop."

"Don't let him in," said Martin feebly.

"He won't want any letting in," replied Mark. "He'll come in, sir." Which turned out to be quite true, for he did. His face was almost as hard and knobby as his stick, and so were his hands. His head was like an old black hearth-broom. He sat down on the chest with his hat on, and crossing his legs and looking up at Mark, said, without removing his pipe —

"Well, Mr. Co.! and how do you git along, sir?"

It may be necessary to observe that Mr. Tapley had gravely introduced himself to all strangers, by that name.

"Pretty well, sir; pretty well," said Mark.

"If this ain't Mr. Chuzzlewit, ain't it?" exclaimed the visitor. "How do *you* git along, sir?"

Martin shook his head, and drew the blanket over it involuntarily; for he felt that Hannibal was going to spit, and his eye, as the song says, was upon him.

"You need not regard me, sir," observed Mr. Chollop complacently. "I am fever-proof, and likewise agur."

"Mine was a more selfish motive," said Martin, looking out again. "I was afraid you were going to —"

"I can calc'late my distance, sir," returned Mr. Chollop, "to an inch."

With a proof of which happy faculty he immediately favoured him.

"I re-quire, sir," said Hannibal, "two foot clear in a circ'lar direction, and can engage myself to keep within it. I have gone ten foot, in a circ'lar direction, but that was for a wager."

"I hope you won it, sir," said Mark.

"Well, sir, I realised the stakes," said Chollop. "Yes, sir."

He was silent for a time, during which he was actively engaged in the formation of a magic circle round the chest on which he sat. When it was completed, he began to talk again.

"How do you like our country, sir?" he inquired, looking at Martin.

"Not at all," was the invalid's reply.

Chollop continued to smoke without the least appearance of emotion, until he felt disposed to speak again. That time at length arriving, he took his pipe from his mouth, and said: —

"I am not surprised to hear you say so. It requires An elevation, and A preparation of the intellect. The mind of man must be prepared for Freedom, Mr. Co."

He addressed himself to Mark; because he saw that Martin, who wished him to go, being already half mad with feverish irritation which the droning voice of this new horror rendered almost insupportable, had closed his eyes, and turned on his uneasy bed.

"A little bodily preparation wouldn't be amiss, either, would it, sir," said Mark, "in the case of a blessed old swamp like this?"

"Do you con-sider this a swamp, sir?" inquired Chollop gravely.

"Why, yes, sir," returned Mark, "I haven't a doubt about it, myself."

"The sentiment is quite Europian," said the Major, "and does not surprise me; what would your English millions say to such a swamp in England, sir?"

"They'd say it was an uncommon nasty one, I should think," said Mark; "and that they would rather be inoculated for fever in some other way."

"Europian!" remarked Chollop, with sardonic pity. "Quite Europian!"

And there he sat. Silent and cool, as if the house were his; smoking away like a factory chimney.

Mr. Chollop was, of course, one of the most remarkable men in the country; but he really was a notorious person besides. He was usually described by his friends, in the South and West, as "a splendid sample of our na-tive raw material, sir,"

and was much esteemed for his devotion to rational Liberty, for the better propagation whereof he usually carried a brace of revolving pistols in his coat pocket, with seven barrels apiece. He also carried, amongst other trinkets, a sword-stick, which he called his "Tickler;" and a great knife, which (for he was a man of a pleasant turn of humour) he called "Ripper," in allusion to its usefulness as a means of ventilating the stomach of any adversary in a close contest. He had used these weapons with distinguished effect in several instances, all duly chronicled in the newspapers; and was greatly beloved for the gallant manner in which he had "jobbed out" the eye of one gentleman, as he was in the act of knocking at his own street-door.

Mr. Chollop was a man of a roving disposition; and in any less advanced community might have been mistaken for a violent vagabond. But his fine qualities being perfectly understood and appreciated in those regions where his lot was cast, and where he had many kindred spirits to consort with, he may be regarded as having been born under a fortunate star, which is not always the case with a man so much before the age in which he lives. Preferring, with a view to the gratification of his tickling and ripping fancies, to dwell upon the outskirts of society, and in the more remote towns and cities, he was in the habit of emigrating from place to place, and establishing in each some business — usually a newspaper — which he presently sold; for the most part closing the bargain by challenging, stabbing, pistolling, or gouging, the new editor, before he had quite taken possession of the property.

He had come to Eden on a speculation of this kind, but had abandoned it, and was about to leave. He always introduced himself to strangers as a worshipper of Freedom; was the consistent advocate of Lynch law and slavery; and invariably recommended, both in print and speech, the "tarring and feathering" of any unpopular person who differed from himself. He called this "planting the standard of civilisation in the wilder gardens of My country."

There is little doubt that Chollop would have planted this standard in Eden at Mark's expense, in return for his plainness of speech (for the genuine Freedom is dumb, save when she vaunts herself), but for the utter desolation and decay prevailing in the settlement, and his own approaching departure from

As it was, he contented himself with showing Mark one of the revolving pistols, and asking him what he thought of that weapon.

"It ain't long, since I shot a man down with that, sir, in the State of Illinoy," observed Chollop.

"Did you, indeed!" said Mark, without the smallest agitation. "Very free of you, and very independent!"

"I shot him down, sir," pursued Chollop, "for asserting in the Spartan Portico, a tri-weekly journal, that the ancient Athenians went ahead of the present Locofoco Ticket."

"And what 's that?" asked Mark.

"Europian not to know," said Chollop, smoking placidly. "Europian quite!"

After a short devotion to the interests of the magic circle, he resumed the conversation by observing: —

"You won't half feel yourself at home in Eden, now?"

"No," said Mark, "I don't."

"You miss the imposts of your country. You miss the house dues," observed Chollop.

"And the houses — rather," said Mark.

"No window dues here, sir," observed Chollop.

"And no windows to put 'em on," said Mark.

"No stakes, no dungeons, no blocks, no racks, no scaffolds, no thumbscrews, no pikes, no pillories," said Chollop.

"Nothing but rewolvers and bowie knives," returned Mark. "And what are they? Not worth mentioning!"

The man who had met them on the night of their arrival came crawling up at this juncture, and looked in at the door.

"Well, sir!" said Chollop. "How do *you* git along?"

He had considerable difficulty in getting along at all, and said as much in reply.

"Mr. Co. and me, sir," observed Chollop, "are disputating a piece. He ought to be slicked up pretty smart, to disputate between the Old World and the New, I do expect?"

"Well!" returned the miserable shadow. "So he had."

"I was merely observing, sir," said Mark, addressing this new visitor, "that I looked upon the city in which we have the honour to live, as being swampy. What 's your sentiments?"

"I opinionate it 's moist, perhaps, at certain times," returned the man.

"But not as moist as England, sir?" cried Chollop, with a fierce expression in his face.

"Oh! Not as moist as England; let alone its Institutions," said the man.

"I should hope there ain't a swamp in all Americay, as don't whip *that* small island into mush and molasses," observed Chollop decisively. "You bought slick, straight, and right away, of Scadder, sir?" to Mark.

He answered in the affirmative. Mr. Chollop winked at the other citizen.

"Scadder is a smart man, sir! He is a rising man! He is a man as will come up'ards, right side up, sir!" Mr. Chollop winked again at the other citizen.

"He should have his right side very high up, if I had my way," said Mark. "As high up as the top of a good tall gallows, perhaps."

Mr. Chollop was so delighted at the smartness of his excellent countryman having been too much for the Britisher, and at the Britisher's resenting it, that he could contain himself no longer, and broke forth in a shout of delight. But the strangest exposition of this ruling passion was in the other, the pestilence-stricken, broken, miserable shadow of a man, who derived so much entertainment from the circumstance that he seemed to forget his own ruin in thinking of it, and laughed outright when he said "that Scadder was a smart man, and had drawed a lot of British capital that way, as sure as sun-up."

After a full enjoyment of this joke, Mr. Hannibal Chollop sat smoking and improving the circle, without making any attempts either to converse, or to take leave; apparently labouring under the not uncommon delusion that for a free and enlightened citizen of the United States to convert another man's house into a spittoon for two or three hours together was a delicate attention, full of interest and politeness, of which nobody could ever tire. At last he rose.

"I am a going easy," he observed.

Mark entreated him to take particular care of himself.

"Afore I go," he said sternly, "I have got a leetle word to say to you. You are darnnation 'cute, you are."

Mark thanked him for the compliment.

"But you are much too 'cute to last. I can't con-ceive of

ny spotted Painter in the bush as ever was so riddled through nd through as you will be, I bet."

"What for?" asked Mark.

"We must be cracked-up, sir," retorted Chollop, in a tone of menace. "You are not now in A despotic land. We are a model to the airth, and must be jist cracked-up, I tell you."

"What, I speak too free, do I?" cried Mark.

"I have drawed upon A man, and fired upon A man for less," said Chollop, frowning. "I have knowed strong men leeged to make themselves uncommon skase for less. I have knowed men Lynched for less, and beaten into punkin'-sarse for less, by an enlightened people. We are the intellect and virtue of the airth, the cream Of human natur', and the flower Of moral force. Our backs is easy ris. We must be cracked-up, or they rises, and we snarls. We shows our teeth, I tell you, fierce. You 'd better crack us up, you had!"

After the delivery of this caution, Mr. Chollop departed; with Ripper, Tickler, and the revolvers, all ready for action on the shortest notice.

"Come out from under the blanket, sir," said Mark, "he 's gone. What 's this!" he added softly, kneeling down to look into his partner's face, and taking his hot hand. "What 's come of all that chattering and swaggering? He 's wandering in his mind to-night, and don't know me!"

Martin, indeed, was dangerously ill; very near his death. He lay in that state many days, during which time Mark's poor friends, regardless of themselves, attended him. Mark, fatigued in mind and body; working all the day and sitting up at night; worn with hard living and the unaccustomed toil of his new life; surrounded by dismal and discouraging circumstances of every kind, never complained or yielded in the least degree. If ever he had thought Martin selfish or inconsiderate, or had deemed him energetic only by fits and starts, and then too passive for their desperate fortunes, he now forgot it all. He remembered nothing but the better qualities of his fellow-wanderer, and was devoted to him, heart and hand.

Many weeks elapsed before Martin was strong enough to move about with the help of a stick and Mark's arm; and even then his recovery, for want of wholesome air and proper nourishment, was very slow. He was yet in a feeble and weak condition, when the misfortune he had so much dreaded fell upon them. Mark was taken ill.

Mark fought against it; but the malady fought harder, and his efforts were in vain.

"Floored for the present, sir," he said one morning, sinking back upon his bed, "but jolly!"

Floored indeed, and by a heavy blow! As any one but Martin might have known beforehand.

If Mark's friends had been kind to Martin (and they had been very), they were twenty times kinder to Mark. And now it was Martin's turn to work, and sit beside the bed and watch, and listen through the long, long nights to every sound in the gloomy wilderness; and hear poor Mr. Tapley, in his wandering fancy, playing at skittles in the Dragon, making love remonstrances to Mrs. Lupin, getting his sea-legs on board the Screw, travelling with old Tom Pinch on English roads, and burning stumps of trees in Eden, all at once.

But whenever Martin gave him drink or medicine, or tended him in any way, or came into the house returning from some drudgery without, the patient Mr. Tapley brightened up, and cried: "I'm jolly, sir; I'm jolly!"

Now, when Martin began to think of this, and to look at Mark as he lay there; never reproaching him by so much as an expression of regret; never murmuring; always striving to be manful and staunch, he began to think how was it that this man who had had so few advantages was so much better than he who had had so many. And attendance upon a sick bed, but especially the sick bed of one whom we have been accustomed to see in full activity and vigour, being a great breeder of reflection, he began to ask himself in what they differed.

He was assisted in coming to a conclusion on this head by the frequent presence of Mark's friend, their fellow-passenger across the ocean; which suggested to him that in regard to having aided her, for example, they had differed very much. Somehow he coupled Tom Pinch with this train of reflection; and thinking that Tom would be very likely to have struck up the same sort of acquaintance under similar circumstances, began to think in what respects two people so extremely different were like each other, and were unlike him. At first sight there was nothing very distressing in these meditations, but they did undoubtedly distress him for all that.

Martin's nature was a frank and generous one; but he had been bred up in his grandfather's house; and it will usually be

found that the meaner domestic vices propagate themselves to be their own antagonists. Selfishness does this especially; so do suspicion, cunning, stealth, and covetous propensities. Martin had unconsciously reasoned as a child, "My guardian takes so much thought of himself that, unless I do the like by myself, I shall be forgotten." So he had grown selfish.

But he had never known it. If any one had taxed him with the vice, he would have indignantly repelled the accusation, and conceived himself unworthily aspersed. He never would have known it, but that being newly risen from a bed of dangerous sickness, to watch by such another couch, he felt how nearly Self had dropped into the grave, and what a poor, dependent, miserable thing it was.

It was natural for him to reflect — he had months to do it in — upon his own escape, and Mark's extremity. This led him to consider which of them could be the better spared, and why? Then the curtain slowly rose a very little way; and Self, Self, Self was shown below.

He asked himself, besides, when dreading Mark's decease (as all men do and must, at such a time), whether he had done his duty by him, and had deserved and made a good response to his fidelity and zeal. No; short as their companionship had been, he felt, in many, many instances, that there was blame against himself; and still inquiring why, the curtain slowly rose a little more, and Self, Self, Self dilated on the scene.

It was long before he fixed the knowledge of himself so firmly in his mind that he could thoroughly discern the truth; but in the hideous solitude of that most hideous place, with Hope so far removed, Ambition quenched, and Death beside him rattling at the very door, reflection came, as in a plague-besieguered town; and so he felt and knew the failing of his life, and saw distinctly what an ugly spot it was.

Eden was a hard school to learn so hard a lesson in; but there were teachers in the swamp and thicket, and the pestilential air, who had a searching method of their own.

He made a solemn resolution that when his strength returned he would not dispute the point or resist the conviction, but would look upon it as an established fact that selfishness was in his breast, and must be rooted out. He was so doubtful (and with justice) of his own character, that he determined not to say one word of vain regret or good resolve to Mark, but

steadily to keep his purpose before his own eyes solely; and there was not a jot of pride in this, — nothing but humility and steadfastness, the best armour he could wear. So low had Eden brought him down; so high had Eden raised him up.

After a long and lingering illness (in certain forlorn stages of which, when too far gone to speak, he had feebly written "jolly!" on a slate), Mark showed some symptoms of returning health. They came and went, and flickered for a time; but he began to mend at last decidedly; and after that, continued to improve from day to day.

As soon as he was well enough to talk without fatigue, Martin consulted him upon a project he had in his mind, and which a few months back he would have carried into execution without troubling anybody's head but his own.

"Ours is a desperate case," said Martin; "plainly. The place is deserted; its failure must have become known; and selling what we have bought to any one, for anything, is hopeless, even if it were honest. We left home on a mad enterprise, and have failed. The only hope left us, the only one end for which we have now to try, is to quit this settlement for ever, and get back to England. Any how! by any means! Only to get back there, Mark."

"That 's all, sir," returned Mr. Tapley, with a significant stress upon the words; "only that!"

"Now, upon this side of the water," said Martin, "we have but one friend who can help us, and that is Mr. Bevan."

"I thought of him when you was ill," said Mark.

"But for the time that would be lost, I would even write to my grandfather," Martin went on to say, "and implore him for money to free us from this trap into which we were so cruelly decoyed. Shall I try Mr. Bevan first?"

"He 's a very pleasant sort of a gentleman," said Mark. "I think so."

"The few goods we bought here, and in which we spent our money, would produce something if sold," resumed Martin; "and whatever they realise shall be paid him instantly. But they can't be sold here."

"There 's nobody but corpses to buy 'em," said Mr. Tapley, shaking his head with a rueful air, "and pigs."

"Shall I tell him so, and only ask him for money enough to enable us by the cheapest means to reach New York, or any

port from which we may hope to get a passage home, by serving in any capacity; explaining to him at the same time how I am connected, and that I will endeavour to repay him, even through my grandfather, immediately on our arrival in England!"

"Why, to be sure," said Mark; "he can only say no, and he may say yes. If you don't mind trying him, sir —"

"Mind!" exclaimed Martin. "I am to blame for coming here, and I would do anything to get away. I grieve to think of the past. If I had taken your opinion sooner, Mark, we never should have been here, I am certain."

Mr. Tapley was very much surprised at this admission, but protested, with great vehemence, that they would have been there all the same; and that he had set his heart upon coming to Eden, from the first word he had ever heard of it.

Martin then read him a letter to Mr. Bevan, which he had already prepared. It was frankly and ingenuously written, and described their situation without the least concealment; plainly stated the miseries they had undergone; and preferred their request in modest but straightforward terms. Mark highly commended it; and they determined to despatch it by the next steamboat going the right way, that might call to take in wood at Eden, — where there was plenty of wood to spare. Not knowing how to address Mr. Bevan at his own place of abode, Martin superscribed it to the care of the memorable Mr. Norris of New York, and wrote upon the cover an entreaty that it might be forwarded without delay.

More than a week elapsed before a boat appeared; but at length they were awakened very early one morning by the high-pressure snorting of the Esau Slodge; named after one of the most remarkable men in the country, who had been very eminent somewhere. Hurrying down to the landing-place, they got it safe on board; and waiting anxiously to see the boat depart, stopped up the gangway, an instance of neglect which caused the "Capting" of the Esau Slodge to "wish he might be sifted fine as flour, and whittled small as chips; that if they did n't come off that there fixing, right smart, too, he 'd spill 'em in the drink;" whereby the "Capting" metaphorically said he 'd throw them in the river.

They were not likely to receive an answer for eight or ten weeks at the earliest. In the mean time they devoted such

strength as they had to the attempted improvement of their land; to clearing some of it, and preparing it for useful purposes. Monstrously defective as their farming was, still it was better than their neighbours'; for Mark had some practical knowledge of such matters, and Martin learned of him; whereas the other settlers who remained upon the putrid swamp (a mere handful, and those withered by disease) appeared to have wandered there with the idea that husbandry was the natural gift of all mankind. They helped each other after their own manner in these struggles, and in all others; but they worked as hopelessly and sadly as a gang of convicts in a penal settlement.

Often at night when Mark and Martin were alone, and lying down to sleep, they spoke of home, familiar places, houses, roads, and people whom they knew; sometimes in the lively hope of seeing them again, and sometimes with a sorrowful tranquillity, as if that hope were dead. It was a source of great amazement to Mark Tapley to find, pervading all these conversations, a singular alteration in Martin.

"I don't know what to make of him," he thought one night, "he ain't what I supposed. He don't think of himself half as much. I 'll try him again. Sleep, sir?"

"No, Mark."

"Thinking of home, sir?"

"Yes, Mark."

"So was I, sir. I was wondering how Mr. Pinch and Mr. Pecksniff gets on now."

"Poor Tom!" said Martin thoughtfully.

"Weak-minded man, sir," observed Mr. Tapley. "Plays the organ for nothing, sir. Takes no care of himself!"

"I wish he took a little more, indeed," said Martin; "though I don't know why I should; we should n't like him half as well, perhaps."

"He gets put upon, sir," hinted Mark.

"Yes," said Martin, after a short silence. "*I* know that, Mark."

He spoke so regretfully that his partner abandoned the theme, and was silent for a short time, until he had thought of another.

"Ah, sir!" said Mark, with a sigh. "Dear me! You 've ventured a good deal for a young lady's love!"

"I tell you what, I 'm not so sure of that, Mark," was the reply — so hastily and energetically spoken that Martin sat up in his bed to give it. "I begin to be far from clear upon it. You may depend upon it, she is very unhappy. She has sacrificed her peace of mind; she has endangered her interests very much; she can't run away from those who are jealous of her, and opposed to her, as I have done. She has to endure, Mark; to endure without the possibility of action, poor girl. I begin to think she has more to bear than ever I have had. Upon my soul, I do!"

Mr. Tapley opened his eyes wide, in the dark; but did not interrupt.

"And I 'll tell you a secret, Mark," said Martin, "since we are upon this subject. That ring — "

"Which ring, sir?" Mark inquired, opening his eyes still wider.

"That ring she gave me when we parted, Mark. She bought it; bought it, knowing I was poor and proud (Heaven help me — proud!) and wanted money."

"Who says so, sir?" asked Mark.

"I say so; I know it. I thought of it, my good fellow, hundreds of times, while you were lying ill. And like a beast, I took it from her hand and wore it on my own, and never dreamed of this even at the moment when I parted with it, when some faint glimmering of the truth might surely have possessed me! But it 's late," said Martin, checking himself, "and you are weak and tired, I know. You only talk to cheer me up. Good night! God bless you, Mark!"

"God bless you, sir! But I 'm reg'larly defrauded," thought Mr. Tapley, turning round, with a happy face. "It 's a swindle. I never entered for this sort of service. There 'll be no credit in being jolly with *him!*"

The time wore on, and other steamboats coming from the point on which their hopes were fixed, arrived to take in wood; but still no answer to the letter. Rain, heat, foul slime, and noxious vapour, with all the ills and filthy things they bred, prevailed. The earth, the air, the vegetation, and the water that they drank, all teemed with deadly properties. Their fellow-passenger had lost two children long before; and buried now her last. Such things are much too common to be widely known or cared for. Smart citizens grow rich and friendless victims smart and die, and are forgotten. That is all.

At last a boat came panting up the ugly river, and stopped at Eden. Mark was waiting at the wood hut when it came, and had a letter handed to him from on board. He bore it off to Martin. They looked at one another, trembling.

"It feels heavy," faltered Martin. And opening it, a little roll of dollar-notes fell out upon the ground.

What either of them said, or did, or felt, at first, neither of them knew. All Mark could ever tell was that he was at the river's bank again out of breath, before the boat had gone, inquiring when it would retrace its track and put in there.

The answer was, in ten or twelve days; notwithstanding which, they began to get their goods together and to tie them up, that very night. When this stage of excitement was passed, each of them believed (they found this out in talking of it afterwards) that he would surely die before the boat returned.

They lived, however, and it came, after the lapse of three long crawling weeks. At sunrise on an autumn day they stood upon her deck.

"Courage! We shall meet again!" cried Martin, waving his hand to two thin figures on the bank. "In the old world!"

"Or in the next one," added Mark below his breath. "To see them standing side by side, so quiet, is a'most the worst of all!"

They looked at one another, as the vessel moved away, and then looked backward at the spot from which it hurried fast. The log-house, with the open door, and drooping trees about it; the stagnant morning mist and red sun, dimly seen beyond; the vapour rising up from land and river; the quick stream making the loathsome banks it washed more flat and dull — how often they returned in dreams! How often it was happiness to wake, and find them Shadows that had vanished!

CHAPTER XXXIV

IN WHICH THE TRAVELLERS MOVE HOMEWARD, AND ENCOUNTER SOME DISTINGUISHED CHARACTERS UPON THE WAY.

Among the passengers on board the steamboat there was a faint gentleman sitting on a low camp-stool with his legs on a high barrel of flour, as if he were looking at the prospect with his ankles, who attracted their attention speedily.

He had straight black hair, parted up the middle of his head, and hanging down upon his coat; a little fringe of hair upon his chin; wore no neckcloth; a white hat; a suit of black, long in the sleeves, and short in the legs; soiled brown stockings, and laced shoes. His complexion, naturally muddy, was rendered muddier by too strict an economy of soap and water; and the same observation will apply to the washable part of his attire, which he might have changed with comfort to himself and gratification to his friends. He was about five-and-thirty; was crushed and jammed up in a heap, under the shade of a large green cotton umbrella; and ruminated over his tobacco-plug like a cow.

He was not singular, to be sure, in these respects; for every gentleman on board appeared to have had a difference with his laundress, and to have left off washing himself in early youth. Every gentleman, too, was perfectly stopped up with tight lodging, and was dislocated in the greater part of his joints. But about this gentleman there was a peculiar air of sagacity and wisdom which convinced Martin that he was no common character; and this turned out to be the case.

"How do you do, sir?" said a voice in Martin's ear.

"How do you do, sir?" said Martin.

It was a tall thin gentleman who spoke to him, with a carpet-cap on, and a long loose coat of green baize, ornamented about the pockets with black velvet.

"You air from Europe, sir?"

"I am," said Martin.

"You air fortunate, sir."

Martin thought so too, but he soon discovered that the gentleman and he attached different meanings to this remark.

"You air fortunate, sir, in having an opportunity of hearing our Elijah Pogram, sir."

"Your Elijahpogram!" said Martin, thinking it was a new word, and a building of some sort.

"Yes, sir."

Martin tried to look as if he understood him, but he could n't make it out.

"Yes, sir," repeated the gentleman. "Our Elijah Pogram, sir, is, at this minute identically, settin' by the engine."

The gentleman under the umbrella put his right forefinger to his eyebrow, as if he were revolving schemes of state.

"That is Elijah Pogram, is it?" said Martin.

"Yes, sir," replied the other. "That is Elijah Pogram."

"Dear me!" said Martin. "I am astonished." He had not the least idea who this Elijah Pogram was, having never heard the name in all his life.

"If the biler of this vessel was Tom Pinch, sir," said his new acquaintance, "and Tom Pinch now, this would be a festival day in the calendar of despotism; pretty nigh equallin', sir, in its effects upon the human race, our Fourth of glorious July. Yes, sir, that is the Honourable Elijah Pogram, Member of Congress; one of the master-minds of our country, sir. There is a brow, sir, there!"

"Quite remarkable," said Martin.

"Yes, sir. Our own immortal Chizzle, sir, is said to have observed, when he made the celebrated Pogram statter in marble, which rose so much contest and prejudice in Europe, that the brow was more than mortal. This was before the Pogram Defiance, and was, therefore, a prediction, or a smart."

"What is the Pogram Defiance?" asked Martin, thinking perhaps, it was the sign of a public house.

"An oration, sir," returned his friend.

"Oh! to be sure," cried Martin. "What am I thinking of? It defied —"

"It defied the world, sir," said the other gravely. "Defied the world in general to compete with our country upon any basis, and developed our internal resources for making war

upon the universal airth. You would like to know Elijah P'gram, sir?"

"If you please," said Martin.

"Mr. Pogram," said the stranger — Mr. Pogram having overheard every word of the dialogue — "this is a gentleman from Europe, sir; from England, sir. But gen'rous ene-mies may meet upon the neutral sile of private life, I think."

The languid Mr. Pogram shook hands with Martin, like a clock-work figure that was just running down. But he made friends by chewing like one that was just wound up.

"Mr. Pogram," said the introducer, "is a public servant, sir. When Congress is recessed, he makes himself acquainted with those free United States of which he is the gifted son."

It occurred to Martin, that if the Honourable Elijah Pogram had stayed at home, and sent his shoes upon a tour, they would have answered the same purpose; for they were the only part of him in a situation to see anything.

In course of time, however, Mr. Pogram rose; and having objected certain plugging consequences which would have impeded his articulation, took up a position where there was something to lean against, and began to talk to Martin; shading himself with the green umbrella all the time.

As he began with the words, "How do you like —?" Martin took him up, and said: —

"The country, I presume?"

"Yes, sir," said Elijah Pogram. A knot of passengers gathered round to hear what followed; and Martin heard his friend say, as he whispered to another friend, and rubbed his hands, "Pogram will smash him into sky-blue fits, I know!"

"Why," said Martin, after a moment's hesitation, "I have learned by experience, that you take an unfair advantage of a stranger when you ask that question. You don't mean it to be answered except in one way. Now, I don't choose to answer it in that way, for I cannot honestly answer it in that way. And therefore I would rather not answer it at all."

But Mr. Pogram was going to make a great speech in the next session about foreign relations, and was going to write strong articles on the subject; and as he greatly favoured the free and independent custom (a very harmless and agreeable one) of procuring information of any sort in any kind of confidence, and afterwards perverting it publicly in any manner that

happened to suit him, he had determined to get at Martin's opinions somehow or other. For, if he could have got nothing out of him, he would have had to invent it for him, and that would have been laborious. He made a mental note of his answer, and went in again.

"You are from Eden, sir? How did you like Eden?"

Martin said what he thought of that part of the country in pretty strong terms.

"It is strange," said Pogram, looking round upon the group, "this hatred of our country and her Institutions! This national antipathy is deeply rooted in the British mind!"

"Good Heaven, sir," cried Martin. "Is the Eden Land Corporation, with Mr. Scadder at its head, and all the misery it has worked at its door, an Institution of America? A part of any form of government that ever was known or heard of?"

"I con-sider the course of this to be," said Pogram, looking round again and taking himself up where Martin had interrupted him, "partly jealousy and preju-dice, and partly the nat'ral unfitness of the British people to appreciate the ex-alted Institutions of our native land. I expect, sir," turning to Martin again, "that a gentleman named Chollop happened in upon you during your lo-cation in the town of Eden?"

"Yes," answered Martin; "but my friend can answer this better than I can, for I was very ill at the time. Mark! the gentleman is speaking of Mr. Chollop."

"Oh! Yes, sir. Yes. *I* see him," observed Mark.

"A splendid example of our na-tive raw material, sir?" said Pogram interrogatively.

"Indeed, sir!" cried Mark.

The Honourable Elijah Pogram glanced at his friends as though he would have said, "Observe this! See what follows!" and they rendered tribute to the Pogram genius by a gentle murmur.

"Our fellow-countryman is a model of a man, quite fresh from Natur's mould!" said Pogram, with enthusiasm. "He is a true-born child of this free hemisphere! Verdant as the mountains of our country; bright and flowing as our mineral Licks; unspiled by withering conventionalties as air our broad and boundless Perearers! Rough he may be. So air our Barrs. Wild he may be. So air our Buffalers. But he is a child of Natur', and a child of Freedom; and his boastful

answer to the Despot and the Tyrant is, that his bright home is in the Settin' Sun."

Part of this referred to Chollop, and part to a western postmaster, who, being a public defaulter not very long before (a character not at all uncommon in America), had been removed from office; and on whose behalf Mr. Pogram (he voted for Pogram) had thundered the last sentence from his seat in Congress, at the head of an unpopular President. It told brilliantly; for the bystanders were delighted, and one of them said to Martin, "that he guessed he had now seen something of the eloquential aspect of our country, and was chawed up pritty small."

Mr. Pogram waited until his hearers were calm again, before he said to Mark: —

"You do not seem to coincide, sir?"

"Why," said Mark, "I did n't like him much; and that 's the truth, sir. I thought he was a bully; and I did n't admire his carryin' them murderous little persuaders, and being so ready to use 'em."

"It 's singular!" said Pogram, lifting his umbrella high enough to look all round from under it. "It 's strange! You observe the settled opposition to our Institutions which pervades the British mind!"

"What an extraordinary people you are!" cried Martin. "Are Mr. Chollop and the class he represents an Institution here? Are pistols with revolving barrels, sword-sticks, bowie-knives, and such things, Institutions on which you pride yourselves? Are bloody duels, brutal combats, savage assaults, shootings down and stabbing in the streets, your Institutions? Why, I shall hear next, that Dishonour and Fraud are among the Institutions of the great republic!"

The moment the words passed his lips, the Honourable Elijah Pogram looked round again.

"This morbid hatred of our Institutions," he observed, "is quite a study for the physchological observer. He 's alludin' to Repudiation now!"

"Oh! You may make anything an Institution if you like," said Martin laughing, "and I confess you had me there, for you certainly have made that one. But the greater part of these things are one Institution with us, and we call it by the generic name of Old Bailey!"

The bell being rung for dinner at this moment, everybody ran away into the cabin, whither the Honourable Elijah Pogram fled with such precipitation that he forgot his umbrella was up, and fixed it so tightly in the cabin door that it could neither be let down or got out. For a minute or so this accident created a perfect rebellion among the hungry passengers behind, who, seeing the dishes and hearing the knives and forks at work, well knew what would happen unless they got there instantly, and were nearly mad; while several virtuous citizens at the table were in deadly peril of choking themselves in their unnatural efforts to get rid of all the meat before these others came.

They carried the umbrella by storm, however, and rushed in at the breach. The Honourable Elijah Pogram and Martin found themselves after a severe struggle side by side, as they might have come together in the pit of a London theatre; and for four whole minutes afterwards Pogram was snapping up great blocks of everything he could get hold of, like a raven. When he had taken this unusually protracted dinner, he began to talk to Martin; and begged him not to have the least delicacy in speaking with perfect freedom to him, for he was a calm philosopher. Which Martin was extremely glad to hear; for he had begun to speculate on Elijah being a disciple of that other school of republican philosophy, whose noble sentiments are carved with knives upon a pupil's body, and written, not with pen and ink, but tar and feathers.

"What do you think of my countrymen who are present, sir?" inquired Elijah Pogram.

"Oh! very pleasant," said Martin.

They were a very pleasant party. No man had spoken a word; every one had been intent, as usual, on his own private gorging; and the greater part of the company were decidedly dirty feeders.

The Honourable Elijah Pogram looked at Martin as if he thought, "You don't mean that, I know!" And he was soon confirmed in this opinion.

Sitting opposite to them was a gentleman in a high state of tobacco, who wore quite a little beard, composed of the overflowings of that weed as they had dried about his mouth and chin; so common an ornament that it would scarcely have attracted Martin's observation, but that this good citizen, burning

to assert his equality against all comers, sucked his knife for some moments, and made a cut with it at the butter, just as Martin was in the act of taking some. There was a juiciness about the deed that might have sickened a scavenger.

When Elijah Pogram (to whom this was an every-day incident) saw that Martin put the plate away, and took no butter, he was quite delighted, and said: —

"Well! The morbid hatred of you British to the Institutions of our country is as-TONishing!"

"Upon my life!" cried Martin, in his turn, "this is the most wonderful community that ever existed. A man deliberately makes a hog of himself, and *that*'s an Institution!"

"We have no time to ac-quire forms, sir," said Elijah Pogram.

"Acquire!" cried Martin. "But it's not a question of acquiring anything. It's a question of losing the natural politeness of a savage, and that instinctive good breeding which admonishes one man not to offend and disgust another. Don't you think that man over the way, for instance, naturally knows better, but considers it a very fine and independent thing to be a brute in small matters?"

"He is a na-tive of our country, and is nat'rally bright and spry, of course," said Mr. Pogram.

"Now observe what this comes to, Mr. Pogram," pursued Martin. "The mass of your countrymen begin by stubbornly neglecting little social observances, which have nothing to do with gentility, custom, usage, government, or country, but are arts of common, decent, natural human politeness. You abet them in this, by resenting all attacks upon their social offences as if they were a beautiful national feature. From disregarding small obligations they come in regular course to disregard great ones; and so refuse to pay their debts. What they may do, or what they may refuse to do next, I don't know; but any man may see if he will, that it will be something following in natural succession, and a part of one great growth which is rotten at the root."

The mind of Mr. Pogram was too philosophical to see this, so they went on deck again, where, resuming his former post, he chewed until he was in a lethargic state amounting to insensibility.

After a weary voyage of several days, they came again to

that same wharf where Mark had been so nearly left behind, on the night of starting for Eden. Captain Kedgick, the landlord, was standing there, and was greatly surprised to see them coming from the boat.

"Why, what the 'tarnal!" cried the captain. "Well! I do admire at this, I do!"

"We can stay at your house until to-morrow, captain, I suppose?" said Martin.

"I reckon you can stay there for a twelvemonth if you like," retorted Kedgick coolly. "But our people won't best like your coming back."

"Won't like it, Captain Kedgick!" said Martin.

"They did ex-pect you was a going to settle," Kedgick answered, as he shook his head. "They 've been took in, you can't deny!"

"What do you mean?" cried Martin.

"You did n't ought to have received 'em," said the captain. "No, you did n't!"

"My good friend," returned Martin, "did I want to receive them? Was it any act of mine? Did n't you tell me they would rile up, and that I should be flayed like a wild cat — and threaten all kinds of vengeance if I did n't receive them?"

"I don't know about that," returned the captain. "But when our people's frills is out, they 're starched up pretty stiff, I tell you!"

With that, he fell into the rear to walk with Mark, while Martin and Elijah Pogram went on to the National.

"We 've come back alive, you see!" said Mark.

"It ain't the thing I did expect," the captain grumbled. "A man ain't got no right to be a public man, unless he meets the public views. Our fashionable people would n't have attended his le-vee, if they had know'd it."

Nothing mollified the captain, who persisted in taking it very ill that they had not both died in Eden. The boarders at the National felt strongly on the subject too; but it happened by good fortune that they had not much time to think about this grievance, for it was suddenly determined to pounce upon the Honourable Elijah Pogram, and give *him* a le-vee forthwith.

As the general evening meal of the house was over before the arrival of the boat, Martin, Mark, and Pogram were taking tea and fixings at the public table by themselves, when the deputa-

tion entered, to announce this honour: consisting of six gentlemen boarders and a very shrill boy.

"Sir!" said the spokesman.

"Mr. Pogram!" cried the shrill boy.

The spokesman thus reminded of the shrill boy's presence, introduced him. "Doctor Ginery Dunkle, sir. A gentleman of great poetical elements. He has recently jined us here, sir, and is an acquisition to us, sir, I do assure you. Yes, sir. Mr. Jobbld, sir. Mr. Izzard, sir. Mr. Julius Bib, sir."

"Julius Washington Merryweather Bib," said the gentleman himself *to* himself.

"I beg your pardon, sir. Excuse me. Mr. Julius Washington Merryweather Bib, sir; a gentleman in the lumber line, sir, and much esteemed. Colonel Groper, sir. Pro-fessor Piper, sir. My own name, sir, is Oscar Buffum."

Each man took one slide forward as he was named; butted at the Honourable Elijah Pogram with his head; shook hands, and slid back again. The introductions being completed, the spokesman resumed.

"Sir!"

"Mr. Pogram!" cried the shrill boy.

"Perhaps," said the spokesman, with a hopeless look, "you will be so good, Doctor Ginery Dunkle, as to charge yourself with the execution of our little office, sir?"

As there was nothing the shrill boy desired more, he immediately stepped forward.

"Mr. Pogram! Sir! A handful Of your fellow-citizens, sir, hearing Of your arrival at the National Hotel, and feeling the patriotic character Of your public services, wish, sir, to have the gratification Of beholding you, and mixing with you, sir; and unbending with you, sir, in those moments which —"

"Air," suggested Buffum.

"Which air so peculiarly the lot, sir, Of our great and happy country."

"Hear!" cried Colonel Groper, in a loud voice. "Good. Hear him! Good!"

"And therefore, sir," pursued the Doctor, "they request as A mark Of their respect; the honour of your company at a little le-Vee, sir, in the ladies' ordinary, at eight o'clock."

Mr. Pogram bowed, and said: —

"Fellow countrymen!"

"Good!" cried the Colonel. "Hear him! Good!"

Mr. Pogram bowed to the Colonel individually, and then resumed: —

"Your approbation of My labours in the common cause goes to my heart. At all times and in all places; in the ladies' ordinary, My friends, and in the Battle Field — "

"Good, very good! Hear him! Hear him!" said the Colonel.

"The name Of Pogram will be proud to jine you. And may it, My friends, be written on My tomb, 'He was a member of the Con-gress of our common country, and was ac-Tive in his trust.' "

"The Com-mittee, sir," said the shrill boy, "will wait upon you at five minutes afore eight. I take My leave, sir!"

Mr. Pogram shook hands with him, and everybody else, once more; and when they came back again at five minutes before eight, they said, one by one, in a melancholy voice, "How do you do, sir?" and shook hands with Mr. Pogram all over again, as if he had been abroad for a twelvemonth in the mean time, and they met now at a funeral.

But by this time, Mr. Pogram had freshened himself up, and had composed his hair and features after the Pogram statue, so that any one with half an eye might cry out, "There he is! as he delivered the Defiance!" The Committee were embellished also; and when they entered the ladies' ordinary in a body, there was much clapping of hands from ladies and gentlemen, accompanied by cries of "Pogram! Pogram!" and some standing up on chairs to see him.

The object of the popular caress looked round the room as he walked up it, and smiled; at the same time observing to the shrill boy that he knew something of the beauty of the daughters of their common country, but had never seen it in such lustre and perfection as at that moment. Which the shrill boy put in the paper next day, to Elijah Pogram's great surprise.

"We will re-quest you, sir, if you please," said Buffum, laying hands on Mr. Pogram as if he were taking his measure for a coat, "to stand up with your back agin the wall right in the furthest corner, that there may be more room for our fellow-citizens. If you could set your back right slap agin that curtain-peg, sir, keeping your left leg everlastingly behind the stove, we should be fixed quite slick."

Mr. Pogram did as he was told, and wedged himself into such a little corner that the Pogram statue would n't have known him.

The entertainments of the evening then began. Gentlemen brought ladies up, and brought themselves up, and brought each other up; and asked Elijah Pogram what he thought of this political question, and what he thought of that; and looked at him, and looked at one another, and seemed very unhappy indeed. The ladies on the chairs looked at Elijah Pogram through their glasses, and said audibly, "I wish he 'd speak. Why don't he speak? Oh, do ask him to speak!" And Elijah Pogram looked sometimes at the ladies and sometimes elsewhere, delivering senatorial opinions as he was asked for them. But the great end and object of the meeting seemed to be not to let Elijah Pogram out of the corner on any account; so there they kept him, hard and fast.

A great bustle at the door, in the course of the evening, announced the arrival of some remarkable person; and immediately afterwards an elderly gentleman, much excited, was seen to precipitate himself upon the crowd, and battle his way towards the Honourable Elijah Pogram. Martin, who had found a snug place of observation in a distant corner, where he stood with Mark beside him (for he did not so often forget him now as formerly, though he still did sometimes), thought he knew this gentleman, but had no doubt of it, when he cried as loud as he could, with his eyes starting out of his head: —

"Sir, Mrs. Hominy!"

"Lord bless that woman, Mark. She has turned up again!"

"Here she comes, sir," answered Mr. Tapley. "Pogram knows her. A public character! Always got her eye upon her country, sir! If that there lady's husband is of my opinion, what a jolly old gentleman he must be!"

A lane was made; and Mrs. Hominy, with the aristocratic stalk, the pocket-handkerchief, the clasped hands, and the classical cap, came slowly up it, in a procession of one. Mr. Pogram testified emotions of delight on seeing her, and a general hush prevailed. For it was known that when a woman like Mrs. Hominy encountered a man like Pogram, something interesting must be said.

Their first salutations were exchanged in a voice too low to reach the impatient ears of the throng; but they soon became

audible, for Mrs. Hominy felt her position, and knew what was expected of her.

Mrs. H. was hard upon him at first; and put him through a rigid catechism, in reference to a certain vote he had given, which she had found it necessary, as the mother of the modern Gracchi, to deprecate in a line by itself, set up expressly for the purpose in German text. But Mr. Pogram evading it by a well-timed allusion to the star-spangled banner, which it appeared had the remarkable peculiarity of flouting the breeze whenever it was hoisted where the wind blew, she forgave him. They now enlarged on certain questions of tariff, commercial treaty, boundary, importation and exportation, with great effect. And Mrs. Hominy not only talked, as the saying is, like a book, but actually did talk her own books, word for word.

"My! what is this?" cried Mrs. Hominy, opening a little note which was handed her by her excited gentleman-usher. "Do tell! oh well, now! on'y think!"

And then she read aloud, as follows: —

"Two literary ladies present their compliments to the mother of the modern Gracchi, and claim her kind introduction, as their talented countrywoman, to the honourable (and distinguished) Elijah Pogram, whom the two L. L.'s have often contemplated in the speaking marble of the soul-subduing Chiggle. On a verbal intimation from the mother of the M. G., that she will comply with the request of the two L. L.'s, they will have the immediate pleasure of joining the galaxy assembled to do honour to the patriotic conduct of a Pogram. It may be another bond of union between the two L. L.'s and the mother of the M. G. to observe that the two L. L.'s are Transcendental."

Mrs. Hominy promptly rose, and proceeded to the door, whence she returned, after a minute's interval, with the two L. L.'s, whom she led through the lane in the crowd, with all that stateliness of deportment which was so remarkably her own, up to the great Elijah Pogram. It was (as the shrill boy cried out in an ecstacy) quite the Last Scene from Coriolanus.

One of the L. L.'s wore a brown wig of uncommon size. Sticking on the forehead of the other, by invisible means, was a massive cameo, in size and shape like the raspberry tart which is ordinarily sold for a penny, representing on its front the capitol at Washington.

"Miss Toppit and Miss Codger!" said Mrs. Hominy.

"Codger 's the lady so often mentioned in the English newspapers, I should think, sir," whispered Mark. "The oldest inhabitant, as never remembers anything."

"To be presented to a Pogram," said Miss Codger, "by a Hominy, indeed, a thrilling moment is it in its impressiveness as what we call our feelings. But why we call them so, or why impressed they are, or if impressed they are at all, or if at all we are, or if there really is, oh, gasping one! a Pogram or a Hominy, or any active principle, to which we give those titles, is a topic, Spirit searching, light abandoned, much too vast to enter on, at this unlooked for crisis."

"Mind and matter," said the lady in the wig, "glide swift into the vortex of immensity. Howls the Sublime, and softly sleeps the calm Ideal, in the whispering chambers of Imagination. To hear it, sweet it is. But then outlaughs the stern philosopher, and saith to the Grotesque, 'What, ho! arrest for me that Agency. Go bring it here!' And so the vision fadeth."

After this, they both took Mr. Pogram by the hand, and pressed it to their lips, as a patriotic palm. That homage paid, the mother of the modern Gracchi called for chairs, and the three literary ladies went to work in earnest, to bring poor Pogram out, and make him show himself in all his brilliant colours.

How Pogram got out of his depth instantly, and how the three L. L.'s were never in theirs, is a piece of history not worth recording. Suffice it, that being all four out of their depths, and all unable to swim, they splashed up words in all directions and floundered about famously. On the whole, it was considered to have been the severest mental exercise ever heard in the National Hotel. Tears stood in the shrill boy's eyes several times; and the whole company observed that their heads ached with the effort — as well they might.

When it at last became necessary to release Elijah Pogram from the corner, and the Committee saw him safely back again to the next room, they were fervent in their admiration.

"Which," said Mr. Buffum, "must have vent, or it will burst. Toe you, Mr. Pogram, I am grateful. Toe-wards you, sir, I am inspired with lofty veneration, and with deep e-motion. The sentiment Toe which I would propose to give ex-

pression, sir, is this: 'May you ever be as firm, sir, as your marble statter! May it ever be as great a terror Toe its enemies as you.'"

There is some reason to suppose that it was rather terrible to its friends; being a statue of the Elevated or Goblin School, in which the Honourable Elijah Pogram was represented as in a very high wind, with his hair all standing on end, and his nostrils blown wide open. But Mr. Pogram thanked his friend and countryman for the aspiration to which he had given utterance, and the Committee, after another solemn shaking of hands, retired to bed, except the Doctor; who immediately repaired to the newspaper-office, and there wrote a short poem suggested by the events of the evening, beginning with fourteen stars, and headed, "A Fragment. Suggested by witnessing the Honourable Elijah Pogram engaged in a philosophical disputation with three of Columbia's fairest daughters. By Doctor Ginery Dunkle. Of Troy."

If Pogram was as glad to get to bed as Martin was, he must have been well rewarded for his labours. They started off again next day (Martin and Mark previously disposing of their goods to the storekeepers of whom they had purchased them, for anything they would bring), and were fellow-travellers to within a short distance of New York. When Pogram was about to leave them he grew thoughtful, and after pondering for some time, took Martin aside.

"We air going to part, sir," said Pogram.

"Pray don't distress yourself," said Martin: "we must bear it."

"It ain't that, sir," returned Pogram, "not at all. But I should wish you to accept a copy of My oration."

"Thank you," said Martin, "you are very good. I shall be most happy."

"It ain't quite that, sir, neither," resumed Pogram; "air you bold enough to introduce a copy into your country?"

"Certainly," said Martin. "Why not?"

"Its sentiments air strong, sir," hinted Pogram darkly.

"That makes no difference," said Martin. "I'll take a dozen if you like."

"No, sir," retorted Pogram. "Not A dozen. That is more than I require. If you are content to run the hazard, sir, here is one for your Lord Chancellor," producing it, "and one for

Your principal Secretary of State. I should wish them to see it, sir, as expressing what my opinions air. That they may not plead ignorance at a future time. But don't get into danger, sir, on my account!"

"There is not the least danger, I assure you," said Martin. So he put the pamphlets in his pocket, and they parted.

Mr. Bevan had written in his letter that, at a certain time, which fell out happily just then, he would be at a certain hotel in the city, anxiously expecting to see them. To this place they repaired without a moment's delay. They had the satisfaction of finding him within; and of being received, by their good friend, with his own warmth and heartiness.

"I am truly sorry and ashamed," said Martin, "to have begged of you. But look at us. See what we are, and judge to what we are reduced!"

"So far from claiming to have done you any service," returned the other, "I reproach myself with having been, unwittingly, the original cause of your misfortunes. I no more supposed you would go to Eden on such representations as you received, or, indeed, that you would do anything but be dispossessed by the readiest means of your idea that fortunes were so easily made here, than I thought of going to Eden myself."

"The fact is, I closed with the thing in a mad and sanguine manner," said Martin, "and the less said about it the better for me. Mark, here, had n't a voice in the matter."

"Well! But he had n't a voice in any other matter, had he?" returned Mr. Bevan, laughing with an air that showed his understanding of Mark and Martin too.

"Not a very powerful one, I am afraid," said Martin with a blush. "But live and learn, Mr. Bevan! Nearly die and learn — and we learn the quicker."

"Now," said their friend, "about your plans. You mean to return home at once?"

"Oh, I think so," returned Martin hastily, for he turned pale at the thought of any other suggestion. "That is your opinion too, I hope?"

"Unquestionably. For I don't know why you ever came here; though it 's not such an unusual case, I am sorry to say, that we need go any farther into that. You don't know that

the ship in which you came over, with our friend General Fladdock [illegible], of course!"

"The Screw!" said Martin.

"Yes; and she is advertised to sail to-morrow."

This was tantalising news, but tantalising only, for Martin knew that his getting any employment on board a ship of that class was hopeless. The money in his pocket would not pay the chief item of the sum he had already borrowed, and had it been enough for their passage-money, he could hardly have resolved to spend it. He explained this to Mr. Bevan, and stated what their project was.

"Why, that's as bad as Eden every bit," retorted his friend. "You must take your passage like a Christian; at least, as like a Christian as a fore-cabin passenger can; and owe me a few more dollars than you intend. If Mark will go down to the ship and see what passengers there are, and find that you can go in her, without being actually suffocated, above all, go! You and I will look about us in the meantime (we won't call at the Norris's unless you like), and we will all three dine together in the afternoon."

Martin had nothing to express but gratitude, and so it was arranged. But he went out of the room after Mark, and advised him to take their passage in the Screw, though they lay upon the bare deck, which Mr. Tapley, who needed no entreaty on the subject, readily promised to do.

When he and Martin met again, and were alone, he was in high spirits, and evidently had something to communicate which he gloried in very much.

"I've done Mr. Bevan, sir," said Mark.

"Done Mr. Bevan!" repeated Martin.

"The cook of the Screw went and got married yesterday, sir," said Mr. Tapley.

Martin looked at him for further explanation.

"And when I got on board, and the word was passed that it was me," said Mark, "the mate he comes to me and asks whether I should like to take this said cook's place upon the passage home. 'For you're used to it,' he says; 'you was always a-cooking for everybody on your passage out.' And so I was," said Mark, "although I never cooked before, I'll take my oath."

"What did you say?" demanded Martin.

"Say!" cried Mark. "That I'd take anything I could get. 'If that's so,' says the mate, 'why, bring a glass of rum;' which they brought according. And my wages, sir," said Mark in high glee, "pays your passage; and I've put the ring-pin in your berth to take it (it's the easy one up in the corner) — and there we are, Rule Britannia, and Britons strike home!"

"There never was such a good fellow as you are!" cried Martin, seizing him by the hand. "But what do you mean by 'doing' Mr. Bevan, Mark?"

"Why, don't you see," said Mark. "We don't tell him, you know. We take his money, but we don't spend it and we don't keep it. What we do is, write him a little note, explaining this engagement, and roll it up, and leave it at the bar, to be given to him after we are gone. Don't you see?"

Martin's delight in this idea was not inferior to Mark's. It was all done as he proposed. They passed a cheerful evening; slept at the hotel; left the letter as arranged, and went off to the ship betimes next morning, with such light hearts as the weight of their past misery engendered.

"Good-by! a hundred thousand times good-by!" said Martin to their friend. "How shall I remember all your kindness! How shall I ever thank you!"

"If you ever become a rich man, or a powerful one," returned his friend, "you shall try to make your Government more careful of its subjects when they roam abroad to live. Tell it what you know of emigration in your own case, and impress upon it how much suffering may be prevented with a little pains!"

Cheerily lads, cheerily! Anchor weighed. Ship in full sail. Her sturdy bowsprit pointing true to England. America a cloud upon the sea behind them!

"Why, Cook! what are you thinking of so steadily?" said Martin.

"Why I was a thinking, sir," returned Mark, "that if I was a painter and was called upon to paint the American Eagle, how should I do it?"

"Paint it as like an Eagle as you could, I suppose."

"No," said Mark. "That wouldn't do for me, sir. I should want to draw it like a Bat, for its short-sightedness;

like a Bantam, for its bragging; like a Magpie, for its honesty; like a Peacock, for its vanity; like an Ostrich, for its putting its head in the mud, and thinking nobody sees it —"

"And like a Phœnix, for its power of springing from the ashes of its faults and vices, and soaring up anew into the sky!" said Martin. "Well, Mark. Let us hope so."

CHAPTER XXXV

ARRIVING IN ENGLAND, MARTIN WITNESSES A CEREMONY, FROM WHICH HE DERIVES THE CHEERING INFORMATION THAT HE HAS NOT BEEN FORGOTTEN IN HIS ABSENCE.

It was midday, and high-water in the English port for which the Screw was bound, when, borne in gallantly upon the fulness of the tide, she let go her anchor in the river.

Bright as the scene was; fresh, and full of motion; airy, free, and sparkling; it was nothing to the life and exultation in the breasts of the two travellers, at sight of the old churches, roofs, and darkened chimney stacks of Home. The distant roar, that swelled up hoarsely from the busy streets, was music in their ears; the lines of people gazing from the wharves were friends held dear; the canopy of smoke that overhung the town was brighter and more beautiful to them than if the richest silks of Persia had been waving in the air. And though the water, going on its glistening track, turned, ever and again, aside, to dance and sparkle round great ships, and heave them up; and leaped from off the blades of oars, a shower of diving diamonds; and wantoned with the idle boats, and swiftly passed, in many a sportive chase, through obdurate old iron rings, set deep into the stonework of the quays; not even it was half so buoyant and so restless as their fluttering hearts, when yearning to set foot once more on native ground.

A year had passed since those same spires and roofs had failed from their eyes. It seemed, to them, a dozen years. Some trifling changes, here and there, they called to mind; and wondered that they were so few and slight. In health and fortune, prospect and resource, they came back poorer men than they had gone away. But it was home. And though home is a name, a word, it is a strong one; stronger than magician ever spoke, or spirit answered to, in strongest conjuration.

Being set ashore, with very little money in their pockets,

and no definite plan of operation in their heads, they sought out a cheap tavern, where they regaled upon a smoking steak, and certain flowing mugs of beer, as only men just landed from the sea can revel in the generous dainties of the earth. When they had feasted, as two grateful tempered giants might have done, they stirred the fire, drew back the glowing curtain from the window, and making each a sofa for himself, by union of the great unwieldy chairs, gazed blissfully into the street.

Even the street was made a fairy street, by being half hidden in an atmosphere of steak, and strong, stout, stand-up English beer. For on the window-glass hung such a mist that Mr. Tapley was obliged to rise and wipe it with his handkerchief, before the passengers appeared like common mortals. And even then a spiral little cloud went curling up from their two glasses of hot grog, which nearly hid them from each other.

It was one of those unaccountable little rooms which are never seen anywhere but in a tavern, and are supposed to have got into taverns by reason of the facilities afforded to the architect for getting drunk while engaged in their construction. It had more corners in it than the brain of an obstinate man; was full of mad closets, into which nothing could be put that was not specially invented and made for that purpose; had mysterious shelvings and bulk-heads, and indications of staircases in the ceiling; and was elaborately provided with a bell that rung in the room itself, about two feet from the handle, and had no connection whatever with any other part of the establishment. It was a little below the pavement, and abutted close upon it; so that passengers grated against the window-panes with their buttons, and scraped it with their baskets; and fearful boys, suddenly coming between a thoughtful guest and the light, derided him, or put out their tongues as if he were a physician; or made white knobs on the ends of their noses by flattening the same against the glass, and vanished awfully, like spectres.

Martin and Mark sat looking at the people as they passed, debating, every now and then, what their first step should be.

"We want to see Miss Mary, of course," said Mark.

"Of course," said Martin. "But I don't know where she is. Not having had the heart to write in our distress — you yourself thought silence most advisable — and consequently,

never having heard from her since we left New York the first time, I don't know where she is, my good fellow."

"My opinion is, sir," returned Mark, "that what we've got to do is to travel straight to the Dragon. There's no need for you to go there, where you're known, unless you like. You may stop ten mile short of it. I'll go on. Mrs. Lupin will tell me all the news. Mr. Pinch will give me every information that we want; and right glad Mr. Pinch will be to do it. My proposal is: To set off walking this afternoon; to stop when we are tired; to get a lift when we can; to walk when we can't; to do it at once, and do it cheap."

"Unless we do it cheap, we shall have some difficulty in doing it at all," said Martin, pulling out the bank, and telling it over in his hand.

"The greater reason for losing no time, sir," replied Mark. "Whereas, when you've seen the young lady, and know what state of mind the old gentleman's in, and all about it, then you'll know what to do next."

"No doubt," said Martin. "You are quite right."

They were raising their glasses to their lips, when their hands stopped midway, and their gaze was arrested by a figure, which slowly, very slowly, and reflectively, passed the window at that moment.

Mr. Pecksniff; placid, calm, but proud, — honestly proud; dressed with peculiar care, smiling with even more than usual blandness, pondering on the beauties of his art with a mild abstraction from all sordid thoughts, and gently travelling across the disc, as if he were a figure in a magic lantern.

As Mr. Pecksniff passed, a person coming in the opposite direction stopped to look after him with great interest and respect, almost with veneration; and the landlord bouncing out of the house, as if he had seen him too, joined this person, and spoke to him, and shook his head gravely, and looked after Mr. Pecksniff likewise.

Martin and Mark sat staring at each other, as if they could not believe it; but there stood the landlord and the other man still. In spite of the indignation with which this glimpse of Mr. Pecksniff had inspired him, Martin could not help laughing heartily; neither could Mark.

"We must inquire into this!" said Martin. "Ask the landlord in, Mark."

Mr. Tapley retired for that purpose, and immediately returned with their large-headed host in safe convoy.

"Pray, landlord!" said Martin, "who is that gentleman who passed just now, and whom you were looking after?"

The landlord poked the fire as if, in his desire to make the most of his answer, he had become indifferent even to the price of coals; and putting his hands in his pockets, said, after inflating himself to give still further effect to his reply:—

"That, gentlemen, is the great Mr. Pecksniff! The celebrated architect, gentlemen!"

He looked from one to the other while he said it, as if he were ready to assist the first man who might be overcome by the intelligence.

"The great Mr. Pecksniff, the celebrated architect, gentlemen," said the landlord, "has come down here to help to lay the first stone of a new and splendid public building."

"Is it to be built from his designs?" asked Martin.

"The great Mr. Pecksniff, the celebrated architect, gentlemen," returned the landlord, who seemed to have an unspeakable delight in the repetition of these words, "carried off the First Premium, and will erect the building."

"Who lays the stone?" asked Martin.

"Our member has come down express," returned the landlord. "No scrubs would do for no such a purpose. Nothing less would satisfy our Directors than our member in the House of Commons, who is returned upon the Gentlemanly Interest."

"Which interest is that?" asked Martin.

"What, don't you know!" returned the landlord.

It was quite clear the landlord did n't. They always told him at election time that it was the Gentlemanly side, and he immediately put on his top-boots, and voted for it.

"When does the ceremony take place?" asked Martin.

"This day," replied the landlord. Then pulling out his watch, he added impressively, "almost this minute."

Martin hastily inquired whether there was any possibility of getting in to witness it; and finding that there would be no objection to the admittance of any decent person, unless indeed the ground were full, hurried off with Mark as hard as they could go.

They were fortunate enough to squeeze themselves into a famous corner on the ground, where they could see all that passed, without much dread of being beheld by Mr. Pecksniff in return. They were not a minute too soon, for, as they were in the act of congratulating each other, a great noise was heard at some distance, and everybody looked towards the gate. Several ladies prepared their pocket-handkerchiefs for waving; and a stray teacher belonging to the charity school being much cheered by mistake, was immensely groaned at when detected.

"Perhaps he has Tom Pinch with him," Martin whispered Mr. Tapley.

"It would be rather too much of a treat for him, would n't it, sir?" whispered Mr. Tapley in return.

There was no time to discuss the probabilities either way, for the charity school, in clean linen, came filing in two and two, so much to the self-approval of all the people present who did n't subscribe to it that many of them shed tears. A band of music followed, led by a conscientious drummer who never left off. Then came a great many gentlemen with wands in their hands, and bows on their breasts, whose share in the proceedings did not appear to be distinctly laid down, and who trod upon each other, and blocked up the entry for a considerable period. These were followed by the Mayor and Corporation, all clustering round the member for the Gentlemanly Interest; who had the great Mr. Pecksniff, the celebrated architect, on his right hand, and conversed with him familiarly as they came along. Then the ladies waved their handkerchiefs, and the gentlemen their hats, and the charity children shrieked, and the member for the Gentlemanly Interest bowed.

Silence being restored, the member for the Gentlemanly Interest rubbed his hands, and wagged his head, and looked about him pleasantly; and there was nothing this member did at which some lady or other did not burst into an ecstatic waving of her pocket-handkerchief. When he looked up at the stone, they said how graceful! when he peeped into the hole, they said how condescending! when he chatted with the Mayor, they said how easy! when he folded his arms they cried with one accord, how statesman-like!

Mr. Pecksniff was observed, too; closely. When he talked to the Mayor, they said, Oh, really, what a courtly man he was! When he laid his hand upon the mason's shoulder,

giving him directions, how pleasant his demeanour to the working classes; just the sort of man who made them feel pleasure to them, poor dear souls!

But now a silver trowel was brought; and when the member for the Gentlemanly Interest, tucking up his coat-sleeve, little sleight-of-hand with the mortar, the air was rent with was the applause. The workmanlike manner in which he it was amazing. No one could conceive where a young manly creature could have picked the knowledge up.

When he had made a kind of dirt-pie under the direction the mason, they brought a little vase containing coins, which the member for the Gentlemanly Interest placed as he were going to conjure; whereat they said how delightful cheerful, what a flow of spirits! This put into its place, ancient scholar read the inscription, which was in Latin in English, that would never do. It gave great satisfaction especially every time there was a good long substantive in third declension, ablative case, with an adjective to match which parodied the assembly became very tender, and much affected.

And now the stone was lowered down into its place amid the shouting of the concourse. When it was finally fixed member for the Gentlemanly Interest struck upon it three with the handle of the trowel, as if inquiring, with a humour, whether anybody was at home. Mr. Pecksniff unrolled his Plans (prodigious plans they were), and gathered round to look at and admire them.

Martin, who had been fretting himself — quite unnecessarily, as Mark thought — during the whole of these could no longer restrain his impatience; but stepping among several others, looked straight over the shoulder unconscious Mr. Pecksniff, at the designs and plans he turned. He returned to Mark, boiling with rage.

"Why, what's the matter, sir?" cried Mark.

"Matter! This is *my* building."

"Your building, sir!" said Mark.

"My grammar-school. I invented it. I did it all. He has only put four windows in, the villain, and spoilt it!"

Mark could hardly believe it at first, but, being assured it was really so, actually held him to prevent his interfering forcibly, until his temporary heat was passed. In the m

time, the member addressed the company on the gratifying deed which he had just performed.

He said that, since he had sat in Parliament to represent the Gentlemanly Interest of that town, — and he might add, the Lady Interest he hoped, besides (pocket-handkerchiefs), — it had been his pleasant duty to come among them, and to raise his voice on their behalf in Another Place (pocket-handkerchiefs and laughter), often. But he had never come among them, and had never raised his voice, with half such pure, such deep, such unalloyed delight, as now. "The present occasion," he said, "will ever be memorable to me; not only for the reasons I have assigned, but because it has afforded me an opportunity of becoming personally known to a gentleman — "

Here he pointed the trowel at Mr. Pecksniff, who was greeted with vociferous cheering, and laid his hand upon his heart.

"— to a gentleman who, I am happy to believe, will reap both distinction and profit from this field; whose fame had previously penetrated to me — as to whose ears has it not! — but whose intellectual countenance I never had the distinguished honour to behold until this day, and whose intellectual conversation I had never before the improving pleasure to enjoy."

Everybody seemed very glad of this, and applauded more than ever.

"But I hope my Honourable Friend," said the Gentlemanly Member — of course he added "if he will allow me to call him so," and of course Mr. Pecksniff bowed — "will give me many opportunities of cultivating the knowledge of him; and that I may have the extraordinary gratification of reflecting in after time that I laid on this day two first stones, both belonging to structures which shall last my life!"

Great cheering again. All this time, Martin was cursing Mr. Pecksniff up hill and down dale.

"My friends!" said Mr. Pecksniff, in reply. "My duty is to build, not speak; to act, not talk; to deal with marble, stone, and brick — not language. I am very much affected. God bless you!"

This address, pumped out apparently from Mr. Pecksniff's very heart, brought the enthusiasm to its highest pitch. The pocket-handkerchiefs were waved again; the charity children were admonished to grow up Pecksniffs, every boy among

them; the corporation, gentlemen with wands, member for the Gentlemanly Interest, — all cheered for Mr. Pecksniff. Three cheers for Mr. Pecksniff! Three more for Mr. Pecksniff! Three more for Mr. Pecksniff, gentlemen, if you please! One more, gentlemen, for Mr. Pecksniff, and let it be a good one to finish with!

In short, Mr. Pecksniff was supposed to have done a great work, and was very kindly, courteously, and generously rewarded. When the procession moved away, and Martin and Mark were left almost alone upon the ground, his merits and a desire to acknowledge them formed the common topic. He was only second to the Gentlemanly member.

"Compare that fellow's situation to-day with ours!" said Martin bitterly.

"Lord bless you, sir!" cried Mark, "what 's the use! Some architects are clever at making foundations, and some architects are clever at building on 'em when they 're made. But it 'll all come right in the end, sir; it 'll all come right!"

"And in the mean time —" began Martin.

"In the mean time, as you say, sir, we have a deal to do, and far to go. So sharp 's the word, and Jolly!"

"You are the best master in the world, Mark," said Martin, "and I will not be a bad scholar if I can help it, I am resolved! So come! Best foot foremost, old fellow!"

CHAPTER XXXVI

TOM PINCH DEPARTS TO SEEK HIS FORTUNE: WHAT HE FINDS AT STARTING.

Oh! what a different town Salisbury was in Tom Pinch's eyes, to be sure, when the substantial Pecksniff of his heart melted away into an idle dream! He possessed the same faith in the wonderful shops, the same intensified appreciation of the mystery and wickedness of the place; made the same exalted estimate of its wealth, population, and resources; and yet it was not the old city, nor anything like it. He walked into the market while they were getting breakfast ready for him at the Inn; and though it was the same market as of old, crowded by the same buyers and sellers; brisk with the same business; noisy with the same confusion of tongues and cluttering of fowls in coops; fair with the same display of rolls of butter, newly made, set forth in linen cloths of dazzling whiteness; green with the same fresh show of dewy vegetables; dainty with the same array in higglers' baskets of small shaving-glasses, laces, braces, trouser-straps, and hardware; savory with the same unstinted show of delicate pigs' feet, and pies made precious by the pork that once had walked upon them, — still it was strangely changed to Tom. For in the centre of the market-place, he missed a statue he had set up there, as in all other places of his personal resort; and it looked cold and bare without that ornament.

The change lay no deeper than this, for Tom was far from being sage enough to know that, having been disappointed in one man, it would have been a strictly rational and eminently wise proceeding to have revenged himself upon mankind in general, by mistrusting them one and all. Indeed, this piece of justice, though it is upheld by the authority of divers profound poets and honourable men, bears a nearer resemblance to the justice of that good Vizier in the Thousand-and-one Nights, who issues orders for the destruction of all the Por-

ters in Bagdad because one of that unfortunate fraternity is supposed to have misconducted himself, than to any logical, not to say Christian system of conduct, known to the world in later times.

Tom had so long been used to steep the Pecksniff of his fancy in his tea, and spread him out upon his toast, and take him as a relish with his beer, that he made but a poor breakfast on the first morning after his expulsion. Nor did he much improve his appetite for dinner by seriously considering his own affairs, and taking counsel thereon with his friend the organist's assistant.

The organist's assistant gave it as his decided opinion that whatever Tom did, he must go to London; for there was no place like it; which may be true in the main, though hardly, perhaps, in itself, a sufficient reason for Tom's going there.

But Tom had thought of London before, and had coupled with it thoughts of his sister, and of his old friend John Westlock, whose advice he naturally felt disposed to seek in this important crisis of his fortunes. To London, therefore, he resolved to go; and he went away to the coach-office at once, to secure his place. The coach being already full, he was obliged to postpone his departure until the next night; but even this circumstance had its bright side as well as its dark one, for, though it threatened to reduce his poor purse with unexpected country charges, it afforded him an opportunity of writing to Mrs. Lupin and appointing his box to be brought to the old finger-post at the old time; which would enable him to take that treasure with him to the metropolis, and save the expense of its carriage. "So," said Tom, comforting himself, "it 's very nearly as broad as it 's long."

And it cannot be denied that, when he had made up his mind to even this extent, he felt an unaccustomed sense of freedom — a vague and indistinct impression of holiday-making — which was very luxurious. He had his moments of depression and anxiety, and they were, with good reason, pretty numerous; but still it was wonderfully pleasant to reflect that he was his own master, and could plan and scheme for himself. It was startling, thrilling, vast, difficult to understand; it was a stupendous truth, teeming with responsibility and self-distrust; but in spite of all his cares, it gave a curious relish to the viands at the Inn, and interposed a dreamy haze between

him and his prospects, in which they sometimes showed to magical advantage.

In this unsettled state of mind, Tom went once more to bed in the low four-poster, to the same immovable surprise of the effigies of the former landlord and the fat ox; and in this condition passed the whole of the succeeding day. When the coach came round at last, with "London" blazoned in letters of gold upon the boot, it gave Tom such a turn that he was half disposed to run away. But he didn't do it; for he took his seat upon the box instead, and, looking down upon the four greys, felt as if he were another grey himself, or, at all events, a part of the turn-out; and was quite confused by the novelty and splendour of his situation.

And really it might have confused a less modest man than Tom to find himself sitting next that coachman; for of all the swells that ever flourished a whip, professionally, he might have been elected Emperor. He didn't handle his gloves like another man, but put them on — even when he was standing on the pavement, quite detached from the coach — as if the four greys were, somehow or other, at the ends of the fingers. It was the same with his hat. He did things with his hat, which nothing but an unlimited knowledge of horses and the wildest freedom of the road could ever have made, him perfect in. Valuable little parcels were brought to him with particular instructions, and he pitched them into this hat, and stuck it on again; as if the laws of gravity did not admit of such an event as its being knocked off or blown off, and nothing like an accident could befall it. The guard, too! Seventy breezy miles a day were written in his very whiskers. His manners were a canter; his conversation a round trot. He was a fast coach upon a down-hill turnpike road; he was all pace. A wagon couldn't have moved slowly, with that guard and his key-bugle on the top of it.

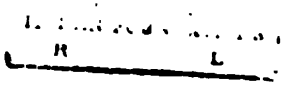
These were all foreshadowings of London, Tom thought, as he sat upon the box, and looked about him. Such a coachman, and such a guard, never could have existed between Salisbury and any other place. The coach was none of your steady-going, yokel coaches, but a swaggering, rakish, dissipated London coach; up all night, and lying by all day, and leading a devil of a life. It cared no more for Salisbury than if it had been a hamlet. It rattled noisily through the best

streets, defied the Cathedral, took the worst corners sharpest, went cutting in everywhere, making everything get out of its way; and spun along the open country road, blowing a lively defiance out of its key-bugle, as its last glad parting legacy.

It was a charming evening, — mild and bright. And even with the weight upon his mind which arose out of the immensity and uncertainty of London, Tom could not resist the captivating sense of rapid motion through the pleasant air. The four greys skimmed along, as if they liked it quite as well as Tom did; the bugle was in as high spirits as the greys; the coachman chimed in sometimes with his voice; the wheels hummed cheerfully in unison; the brass work on the harness was an orchestra of little bells; and thus, as they went clinking, jingling, rattling smoothly on, the whole concern, from the buckles of the leaders' coupling-reins to the handle of the hind boot, was one great instrument of music.

Yoho! past hedges, gates, and trees; past cottages and barns, and people going home from work. Yoho! past donkey-chaises, drawn aside into the ditch, and empty carts with rampant horses, whipped up at a bound upon the little water-course, and held by struggling carters close to the five-barred gate, until the coach had passed the narrow turning in the road. Yoho! by churches dropped down by themselves in quiet nooks, with rustic burial-grounds about them, where the graves are green and daisies sleep — for it is evening — on the bosoms of the dead. Yoho! past streams, in which the cattle cool their feet, and where the rushes grow; past paddock-fences, farms, and rick-yards; past last year's stacks, cut, slice by slice, away, and showing, in the waning light, like ruined gables, old and brown. Yoho! down the pebbly dip, and through the merry water-splash, and up at a canter to the level road again. Yoho! Yoho!

Was the box there, when they came up to the old finger-post? The box! Was Mrs. Lupin herself? Had she turned out magnificently as a hostess should, in her own chaise-cart, and was she sitting in a mahogany chair, driving her own horse Dragon (who ought to have been called Dumpling), and looking lovely? Did the stage-coach pull up beside her, shaving her very wheel, and even while the guard helped her man up with the trunk, did he send the glad echoes of his bugle careering down the chimneys of the distant Pecksniff, as if the coach expressed its exultation in the rescue of Tom Pinch?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"This is kind, indeed!" said Tom, bending down to shake hands with her. "I did n't mean to give you this trouble."

"Trouble, Mr. Pinch!" cried the hostess of the Dragon.

"Well! It 's a pleasure to you, I know," said Tom, squeezing her hand heartily. "Is there any news?"

The hostess shook her head.

"Say you saw me," said Tom, "and that I was very bold and cheerful, and not a bit down-hearted; and that I entreated her to be the same, for all is certain to come right at last. Good-bye!"

"You 'll write when you get settled, Mr. Pinch?" said Mrs. Lupin.

"When I get settled!" cried Tom, with an involuntary opening of his eyes. "Oh, yes, I 'll write when I get settled. Perhaps I had better write before, because I may find that it takes a little time to settle myself; not having too much money, and having only one friend. I shall give your love to the friend, by the way. You were always great with Mr. Westlock, you know. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye!" said Mrs. Lupin, hastily producing a basket with a long bottle sticking out of it. "Take this. Good-bye!"

"Do you want me to carry it to London for you?" cried Tom. She was already turning the chaise-cart round.

"No, no," said Mrs. Lupin. "It 's only a little something for refreshment on the road. Sit fast, Jack. Drive on, sir. All right! Good-bye!"

She was a quarter of a mile off before Tom collected himself; and then he was waving his hand lustily; and so was she.

"And that 's the last of the old finger-post," thought Tom, straining his eyes, "where I have so often stood to see this very coach go by, and where I have parted with so many companions! I used to compare this coach to some great monster that appeared at certain times to bear my friends away into the world. And now it 's bearing me away, to seek my fortune, Heaven knows where and how!"

It made Tom melancholy to picture himself walking up the lane and back to Pecksniff's as of old; and being melancholy, he looked downwards at the basket on his knee, which he had for the moment forgotten.

"She is the kindest and most considerate creature in the world," thought Tom. "Now I *know* that she particularly

told that man of hers not to look at me, on purpose to prevent my throwing him a shilling! I had it ready for him all the time, and he never once looked towards me; whereas that man naturally (for I know him very well) would have done nothing but grin and stare. Upon my word, the kindness of people perfectly melts me."

Here he caught the coachman's eye. The coachman winked. "Remarkable fine woman for her time of life," said the coachman.

"I quite agree with you," returned Tom. "So she is."

"Finer than many a young 'un, I mean to say," observed the coachman. "Eh?"

"Than many a young one," Tom assented.

"I don't care for 'em myself when they're too young," remarked the coachman.

This was a matter of taste, which Tom did not feel himself called upon to discuss.

"You 'll seldom find 'em possessing correct opinions about refreshment, for instance, when they 're too young, you know," said the coachman; "a woman must have arrived at maturity before her mind 's equal to coming provided with a basket like that."

"Perhaps you would like to know what it contains?" said Tom smiling.

As the coachman only laughed, and as Tom was curious himself, he unpacked it, and put the articles, one by one, upon the footboard. A cold roast fowl, a packet of ham in slices, a crusty loaf, a piece of cheese, a paper of biscuits, half a dozen apples, a knife, some butter, a screw of salt, and a bottle of old sherry. There was a letter besides, which Tom put in his pocket.

The coachman was so earnest in his approval of Mrs. Lupin's provident habits, and congratulated Tom so warmly on his good fortune, that Tom felt it necessary, for the lady's sake, to explain that the basket was a strictly Platonic basket, and had merely been presented to him in the way of friendship. When he had made the statement with perfect gravity, for he felt it incumbent on him to disabuse the mind of this lax rover of any incorrect impressions on the subject, he signified that he would be happy to share the gifts with him, and proposed that they should attack the basket in a spirit of good

fellowship at any time in the course of the night which the coachman's experience and knowledge of the road might suggest, as being best adapted to the purpose. From this time they chatted so pleasantly together, that although Tom knew infinitely more of unicorns than horses, the coachman informed his friend the guard, at the end of the next stage, "that rum as the box-seat looked, he was as good a one to go, in pint of conversation, as ever he 'd wish to sit by."

Yoho, among the gathering shades; making of no account the deep reflections of the trees, but scampering on through light and darkness, all the same, as if the light of London fifty miles away were quite enough to travel by, and some to spare. Yoho, beside the village-green, where cricket-players linger yet, and every little indentation made in the fresh grass by bat or wicket, ball or player's foot, sheds out its perfume on the night. Away with four fresh horses from the Bald-faced Stag, where topers congregate about the door admiring; and the last team, with traces hanging loose, go roaming off towards the pond, until observed and shouted after by a dozen throats, while volunteering boys pursue them. Now, with a clattering of hoofs and striking out of fiery sparks, across the old stone bridge, and down again into the shadowy road, and through the open gate, and far away, away, into the wold. Yoho!

Yoho, behind there, stop that bugle for a moment! Come creeping over to the front, along the coach-roof, guard, and make one at this basket! Not that we slacken in our pace the while, not we; we rather put the bits of blood upon their mettle, for the greater glory of the snack. Ah! It is long since this bottle of old wine was brought into contact with the mellow breath of night, you may depend, and rare good stuff it is to wet a bugler's whistle with. Only try it. Don't be afraid of turning up your finger, Bill, another pull! Now take your breath, and try the bugle, Bill. There 's music! There 's a tone! "Over the hills and far away," indeed. Yoho! The skittish mare is all alive to-night. Yoho! Yoho!

See the bright moon! High up before we know it, making the earth reflect the objects on its breast like water. Hedges, trees, low cottages, church steeples, blighted stumps, and flourishing young slips, have all grown vain upon the sudden, and mean to contemplate their own fair images till morning.

The poplars yonder rustle, that their quivering leaves may see themselves upon the ground. Not so the oak; trembling does not become *him;* and he watches himself in his stout old burly steadfastness, without the motion of a twig. The moss-grown gate, ill-poised upon its creaking hinges, crippled and decayed, swings to and fro before its glass, like some fantastic dowager; while our own ghostly likeness travels on, Yoho! Yoho! through ditch and brake, upon the ploughed land and the smooth, along the steep hillside and steeper wall, as if it were a phantom-Hunter.

Clouds too! And a mist upon the hollow! Not a dull fog that hides it, but a light airy gauze-like mist, which in our eyes of modest admiration gives a new charm to the beauties it is spread before — as real gauze has done ere now, and would again, so please you, though we were the Pope. Yoho! Why now we travel like the Moon herself. Hiding this minute in a grove of trees; next minute in a patch of vapour; emerging now upon our broad clear course; withdrawing now, but always dashing on, our journey is a counterpart of hers. Yoho! A match against the Moon!

The beauty of the night is hardly felt, when Day comes leaping up. Yoho! Two stages, and the country roads are almost changed to a continuous street. Yoho, past market-gardens, rows of houses, villas, crescents, terraces, and squares; past wagons, coaches, carts; past early workmen, late stragglers, drunken men, and sober carriers of loads; past brick and mortar in its every shape; and in among the rattling pavements, where a jaunty-seat upon a coach is not so easy to preserve! Yoho, down countless turnings, and through countless mazy ways, until an old Inn-yard is gained, and Tom Pinch, getting down, quite stunned and giddy, is in London!

"Five minutes before the time, too!" said the driver, as he received his fee of Tom.

"Upon my word," said Tom, "I should not have minded very much, if we had been five hours after it; for at this early hour I don't know where to go, or what to do with myself."

"Don't they expect you, then?" inquired the driver.

"Who?" said Tom.

"Why, them," returned the driver.

His mind was so clearly running on the assumption of Tom's having come to town to see an extensive circle of anxious rela-

tions and friends, that it would have been pretty hard work to undeceive him. Tom did not try. He cheerfully evaded the subject, and going into the Inn fell fast asleep before a fire in one of the public rooms opening from the yard. When he awoke, the people in the house were all astir, so he washed and dressed himself, to his great refreshment after the journey; and, it being by that time eight o'clock, went forth at once to see his old friend John.

John Westlock lived in Furnival's Inn, High Holborn, which was within a quarter of an hour's walk of Tom's starting point, but seemed a long way off, by reason of his going two or three miles out of the straight road to make a short cut. When at last he arrived outside John's door, two stories up, he stood faltering with his hand upon the knocker, and trembled from head to foot. For he was rendered very nervous by the thought of having to relate what had fallen out between himself and Pecksniff; and he had a misgiving that John would exult fearfully in the disclosure.

"But it must be made," thought Tom, "sooner or later; and I had better get it over."

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"I am afraid that 's not a London knock," thought Tom. "It did n't sound bold. Perhaps that 's the reason why nobody answers the door."

It is quite certain that nobody came, and that Tom stood looking at the knocker, wondering whereabouts in the neighbourhood a certain gentleman resided who was roaring out to somebody, "Come in!" with all his might.

"Bless my soul!" thought Tom at last. "Perhaps he lives here, and is calling to me. I never thought of that. Can I open the door from the outside, I wonder? Yes, to be sure I can."

To be sure he could, by turning the handle: and to be sure when he did turn it, the same voice came rushing out, crying, "Why don't you come in? Come in, do you hear? What are you standing there for?" — quite violently.

Tom stepped from the little passage into the room from which these sounds proceeded, and had barely caught a glimpse of a gentleman in a dressing-gown and slippers (with his boots beside him ready to put on), sitting at his breakfast with a newspaper in his hand, when the said gentleman, at the immi-

nent hazard of oversetting his tea-table, made a plunge at Tom, and hugged him.

"Why, Tom, my boy!" cried the gentleman. "Tom!"

"How glad I am to see you, Mr. Westlock!" said Tom Pinch, shaking both his hands, and trembling more than ever. "How kind you are!"

"Mr. Westlock!" repeated John, "what do you mean by that, Pinch? You have not forgotten my Christian name, I suppose?"

"No, John, no. I have not forgotten it," said Thomas Pinch. "Good gracious me, how kind you are!"

"I never saw such a fellow in all my life!" cried John. "What do you mean by saying *that* over and over again? What did you expect me to be, I wonder! Here, sit down, Tom, and be a reasonable creature. How are you, my boy? I am delighted to see you!"

"And I am delighted to see *you*," said Tom.

"It 's mutual, of course," returned John. "It always was, I hope. If I had known you had been coming, Tom, I would have had something for breakfast. I would rather have such a surprise than the best breakfast in the world, myself; but yours is another case, and I have no doubt you are as hungry as a hunter. You must make out as well as you can, Tom, and we 'll recompense ourselves at dinner time. You take sugar, I know; I recollect the sugar at Pecksniff's. Ha, ha, ha! How *is* Pecksniff? When did you come to town? *Do* begin at something or other, Tom. There are only scraps here, but they are not at all bad. Boar's Head potted. Try it, Tom! Make a beginning whatever you do. What an old Blade you are! I am delighted to see you."

While he delivered himself of these words in a state of great commotion, John was constantly running backwards and forwards to and from the closet, bringing out all sorts of things in pots, scooping extraordinary quantities of tea out of the caddy, dropping French rolls into his boots, pouring hot water over the butter, and making a variety of similar mistakes without disconcerting himself in the least.

"There!" said John, sitting down for the fiftieth time, and instantly starting up again to make some other addition to the breakfast. "Now we are as well off as we are likely to be till dinner. And now let us have the news, Tom. Imprimis, how 's Pecksniff?"

"I don't know how he is," was Tom's grave answer.

John Westlock put the teapot down, and looked at him in astonishment.

"I don't know how he is," said Thomas Pinch; "and saving that I wish him no ill, I don't care. I have left him, John. I have left him for ever."

"Voluntarily?"

"Why, no, for he dismissed me. But I had first found out that I was mistaken in him; and I could not have remained with him under any circumstances. I grieve to say that you were right in your estimate of his character. It may be a ridiculous weakness, John, but it has been very painful and bitter to me to find this out, I do assure you."

Tom had no need to direct that appealing look towards his friend, in mild and gentle deprecation of his answering with a laugh. John Westlock would as soon have thought of striking him down upon the floor.

"It was all a dream of mine," said Tom, "and it is over. I'll tell you how it happened at some other time. Bear with my folly, John. I do not, just now, like to think or speak about it."

"I swear to you, Tom," returned his friend, with great earnestness of manner, after remaining silent for a few moments, "that when I see, as I do now, how deeply you feel this, I don't know whether to be glad or sorry that you have made the discovery at last. I reproach myself with the thought that I ever jested on the subject; I ought to have known better."

"My dear friend," said Tom, extending his hand, "it is very generous and gallant in you to receive me and my disclosure in this spirit; it makes me blush to think that I should have felt a moment's uneasiness as I came along. You can't think what a weight is lifted off my mind," said Tom, taking up his knife and fork again, and looking very cheerful. "I will punish the Boar's Head dreadfully."

The host, thus reminded of his duties, instantly betook himself to piling up all kinds of irreconcilable and contradictory viands in Tom's plate, and a very capital breakfast Tom made, and very much the better for it Tom felt.

"That 's all right," said John, after contemplating his visitor's proceedings with infinite satisfaction. "Now, about our

plans. You are going to stay with me, of course. Where 's your box?"

"It 's at the Inn," said Tom. "I did n't intend —"

"Never mind what you did n't intend," John Westlock interposed. "What you *did* intend is more to the purpose. You intended, in coming here, to ask my advice, did you not, Tom?"

"Certainly."

"And to take it when I gave it to you?"

"Yes," rejoined Tom smiling, "if it were good advice, which, being yours, I have no doubt it will be."

"Very well. Then don't be an obstinate old humbug in the outset, Tom, or I shall shut up shop and dispense none of that invaluable commodity. You are on a visit to me. I wish I had an organ for you, Tom!"

"So do the gentlemen down stairs, and the gentlemen overhead, I have no doubt," was Tom's reply.

"Let me see. In the first place, you will wish to see your sister this morning," pursued his friend, "and of course you will like to go there alone. I 'll walk part of the way with you; and see about a little business of my own, and meet you here again in the afternoon. Put that in your pocket, Tom. It 's only the key of the door. If you come home first, you 'll want it."

"Really," said Tom, "quartering one's self upon a friend in this way —"

"Why, there are two keys," interposed John Westlock. "I can't open the door with them both at once, can I? What a ridiculous fellow you are, Tom! Nothing particular you 'd like for dinner, is there?"

"Oh dear, no," said Tom.

"Very well, then you may as well leave it to me. Have a glass of cherry brandy, Tom?"

"Not a drop! What remarkable chambers these are!" said Pinch, "there 's everything in 'em!"

"Bless your soul, Tom, nothing but a few little bachelor contrivances! the sort of impromptu arrangements that might have suggested themselves to Philip Quarll or Robinson Crusoe, that 's all. What do you say? Shall we walk?"

"By all means," cried Tom. "As soon as you like."

Accordingly John Westlock took the French rolls out of his

boots, and put his boots on, and dressed himself, giving Tom the paper to read in the meanwhile. When he returned, equipped for walking, he found Tom in a brown study, with the paper in his hand.

"Dreaming, Tom?"

"No," said Mr. Pinch, "no. I have been looking over the advertising sheet, thinking there might be something in it which would be likely to suit me. But, as I often think, the strange thing seems to be that nobody is suited. Here are all kinds of employers wanting all sorts of servants, and all sorts of servants wanting all kinds of employers, and they never seem to come together. Here is a gentleman in a public office in a position of temporary difficulty, who wants to borrow five hundred pounds; and in the very next advertisement here is another gentleman who has got exactly that sum to lend. But he 'll never lend it to him, John, you 'll find! Here is a lady possessing a moderate independence, who wants to board and lodge with a quiet, cheerful family; and here is a family describing themselves in those very words, 'a quiet, cheerful family,' who want exactly such a lady to come and live with them. But she 'll never go, John! Neither do any of these single gentlemen who want an airy bedroom, with the occasional use of a parlour, ever appear to come to terms with these other people who live in a rural situation remarkable for its bracing atmosphere, within five minutes' walk of the Royal Exchange. Even those letters of the alphabet who are always running away from their friends and being entreated at the tops of columns to come back, never *do* come back, if we may judge from the number of times they are asked to do it, and don't. It really seems," said Tom, relinquishing the paper, with a thoughtful sigh, "as if people had the same gratification in printing their complaints as in making them known by word of mouth; as if they found it a comfort and consolation to proclaim, 'I want such and such a thing, and I can't get it, and I don't expect I ever shall!'"

John Westlock laughed at the idea, and they went out together. So many years had passed since Tom was last in London, and he had known so little of it then, that his interest in all he saw was very great. He was particularly anxious, among other notorious localities, to have those streets pointed out to him which were appropriated to the slaughter of coun-

trymen; and was quite disappointed to find, after a half hour's walking, that he had n't had his pocket picked. Upon John Westlock's inventing a pickpocket for his gratification, and pointing out a highly respectable stranger as one of that fraternity, he was much delighted.

His friend accompanied him to within a short distance of Camberwell, and having put him beyond the possibility of mistaking the wealthy brass-and-copper founder's, left him to make his visit. Arriving before the great bell-handle, Tom gave it a gentle pull. The porter appeared.

"Pray does Miss Pinch live here?" said Tom.

"Miss Pinch is governess here," replied the porter.

At the same time he looked at Tom from head to foot, as if he would have said, "You are a nice man, *you* are; where did *you* come from?"

"It 's the same young lady," said Tom, "it 's quite right. Is she at home?"

"I don't know, I 'm sure," rejoined the porter.

"Do you think you could have the goodness to ascertain?" said Tom. He had quite a delicacy in offering the suggestion for the possibility of such a step did not appear to present itself to the porter's mind at all.

The fact was that the porter in answering the gate-bell had, according to usage, rung the house-bell (for it is as well to do these things in the Baronial style while you are about it), and that there the functions of his office had ceased. Having failed to open and shut the gate, and not to explain himself to strangers, he left this little incident to be developed by a footman with the tags, who, at this juncture, called out from the doorsteps: —

"Hollo, there! wot are you up to! This way, you man!"

"Oh!" said Tom, hurrying towards him. "I did not observe that there was anybody else. Pray is Miss Pinch at home?"

"She 's in," replied the footman. As much as to say to Tom, "But if you think she has anything to do with the proprietorship of this place, you had better abandon that idea."

"I wish to see her, if you please," said Tom.

The footman, being a lively young man, happened to have his attention caught at that moment by the flight of a pair of

in which he took so warm an interest, that his gaze was rivetted on the bird until it was quite out of sight. He then invited Tom to come in, and showed him into a parlour.

"Hany neem?" said the young man, pausing languidly at the door.

It was a good thought; because without providing the stranger, in case he should happen to be of a warm temper, with a sufficient excuse for knocking him down, it implied this young man's estimate of his quality, and relieved his breast of the oppressive burden of rating him in secret as a nameless and obscure individual.

"Say her brother, if you please," said Tom.

"Mother?" drawled the footman.

"Brother," repeated Tom, slightly raising his voice. "And if you will say, in the first instance, a gentleman, and then say her brother, I shall be obliged to you, as she does not expect me or know I am in London, and I do not wish to startle her."

The young man's interest in Tom's observations had ceased long before this time, but he kindly waited until now; when, shutting the door, he withdrew.

"Dear me!" said Tom. "This is very disrespectful and uncivil behaviour. I hope these are new servants here, and that Ruth is very differently treated."

His cogitations were interrupted by the sound of voices in the adjoining room. They seemed to be engaged in high dispute, or in indignant reprimand of some offender; and gathering strength occasionally, broke out into a perfect whirlwind. It was in one of these gusts, as it appeared to Tom, that the footman announced him; for an abrupt and unnatural calm took place, and then a dead silence. He was standing before the window, wondering what domestic quarrel might have caused these sounds, and hoping Ruth had nothing to do with it, when the door opened, and his sister ran into his arms.

"Why, bless my soul!" said Tom, looking at her with great pride, when they had tenderly embraced each other, "how altered you are, Ruth! I should scarcely have known you, my love, if I had seen you anywhere else, I declare! You are so improved," said Tom, with inexpressible delight; "you are so womanly; you are so — positively, you know, you are so handsome!"

"If *you* think so, Tom —"

"Oh, but everybody must think so, you know," said Tom, gently smoothing down her hair. "It's matter of fact; not opinion. But what's the matter?" said Tom, looking at her more intently, "how flushed you are! and you have been crying."

"No, I have not, Tom."

"Nonsense," said her brother stoutly. "That's a story. Don't tell me! I know better. What is it, dear? I'm not with Mr. Pecksniff now; I am going to try and settle myself in London; and if you are not happy here (as I very much fear you are not, for I begin to think you have been deceiving me with the kindest and most affectionate intention) you shall not remain here."

Oh! Tom's blood was rising; mind that! Perhaps the Boar's Head had something to do with it, but certainly the footman had. So had the sight of his pretty sister — a great deal to do with it. Tom could bear a good deal himself, but he was proud of her, and pride is a sensitive thing. He began to think, "there are more Pecksniffs than one, perhaps," and by all the pins and needles that run up and down in angry veins, Tom was in a most unusual tingle all at once!

"We will talk about it, Tom," said Ruth, giving him another kiss to pacify him. "I am afraid I cannot stay here."

"Cannot!" replied Tom. "Why then, you shall not, my love. Heydey! You are not an object of charity! Upon my word!"

Tom was stopped in these exclamations by the footman, who brought a message from his master, importing that he wished to speak with him before he went, and with Miss Pinch also.

"Show the way," said Tom. "I'll wait upon him at once."

Accordingly they entered the adjoining room from which the noise of altercation had proceeded; and there they found a middle-aged gentleman, with a pompous voice and manner, and a middle-aged lady, with what may be termed an exciseable face, or one in which starch and vinegar were decidedly employed. There was likewise present that eldest pupil of Miss Pinch, whom Mrs. Todgers, on a previous occasion, had called a syrup, and who was now weeping and sobbing spitefully.

"My brother, sir," said Ruth Pinch, timidly presenting Tom.

"Oh!" cried the gentleman, surveying Tom attentively. "You really are Miss Pinch's brother, I presume? You will excuse my asking. I don't observe any resemblance."

"Miss Pinch has a brother, I know," observed the lady.

"Miss Pinch is always talking about her brother, when she ought to be engaged upon my education," sobbed the pupil.

"Sophia! Hold your tongue!" observed the gentleman. "Sit down, if you please," addressing Tom.

Tom sat down, looking from one face to another, in mute surprise.

"Remain here, if you please, Miss Pinch," pursued the gentleman, looking slightly over his shoulder.

Tom interrupted him here, by rising to place a chair for his sister. Having done which he sat down again.

"I am glad you chance to have called to see your sister to-day, sir," resumed the brass-and-copper founder. "For although I do not approve, as a principle, of any young person engaged in my family, in the capacity of a governess, receiving visitors, it happens in this case to be well-timed. I am sorry to inform you that we are not at all satisfied with your sister."

"We are very much *dis*satisfied with her," observed the lady.

"I 'd never say another lesson to Miss Pinch if I was to be beat to death for it!" sobbed the pupil.

"Sophia!" cried her father. "Hold your tongue!"

"Will you allow me to inquire what your ground of dissatisfaction is?" asked Tom.

"Yes," said the gentleman, "I will. I don't recognise it as a right; but I will. Your sister has not the slightest innate power of commanding respect. It has been a constant source of difference between us. Although she has been in this family for some time, and although the young lady who is now present, has almost, as it were, grown up under her tuition, that young lady has no respect for her. Miss Pinch has been perfectly unable to command my daughter's respect, or to win my daughter's confidence. Now," said the gentleman, allowing the palm of his hand to fall gravely down upon the table, "I maintain that there is something radically wrong in that! You, as her brother, may be disposed to deny it —"

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Tom. "I am not at all posed to deny it. I am sure that there is something ra[illegible] wrong, radically monstrous, in that."

"Good Heavens!" cried the gentleman, looking round [illegible] room, with dignity, "what do I find to be the case! [illegible] results obtrude themselves upon me as flowing from this w[illegible] ness of character on the part of Miss Pinch! What are [illegible] feelings as a father, when, after my desire (repeatedly ex[illegible] to Miss Pinch, as I think she will not venture to de[illegible] my daughter should be choice in her expressions, gen[illegible] her deportment, as becomes her station in life, and [illegible] distant to her inferiors in society, I find her, only this [illegible] morning, addressing Miss Pinch herself as a beggar!"

"A beggarly thing," observed the lady in correction.

"Which is worse," said the gentleman triumph[illegible] "which is worse. A beggarly thing. A low, coarse, [illegible] cable expression!"

"Most despicable," cried Tom. "I am glad to find [illegible] there is a just appreciation of it here."

"So just, sir," said the gentleman, lowering his [illegible] be the more impressive, "so just, that, but for my kn[illegible] Miss Pinch to be an unprotected young person, an or[illegible] without friends, I would, as I assured Miss Pinch upon [illegible] veracity, and personal character, a few minutes ago — I w[illegible] have severed the connection between us at that moment [illegible] from that time."

"Bless my soul, sir!" cried Tom, rising from his seat, [illegible] he was now unable to contain himself any longer, "[illegible] allow such considerations as those to influence you, [illegible] They don't exist, sir. She is not unprotected. She is [illegible] to depart this instant. Ruth, my dear, get your bonnet on!"

"Oh, a pretty family!" cried the lady. "Oh, he's [illegible] brother! There's no doubt about that!"

"As little doubt, madam," said Tom, "as that the [illegible] lady yonder is the child of your teaching, and not my sister. Ruth, my dear, get your bonnet on!"

"When you say, young man," interposed the brass-and-[illegible] per founder haughtily, "with that impertinence wh[illegible] natural to you, and which I therefore do not condemn [illegible] notice further, that the young lady, my eldest daughter, [illegible] been educated by any one but Miss Pinch, you — I [illegible]

proceed. You comprehend me fully. I have no doubt you are used to it."

"Sir!" cried Tom, after regarding him in silence for some little time. "If you do not understand what I mean, I will tell you. If you do understand what I mean, I beg you not to repeat that mode of expressing yourself in answer to it. My meaning is, that no man can expect his children to respect what he degrades."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the gentleman. "Cant! cant! The common cant!"

"The common story, sir!" said Tom; "the story of a common mind. Your governess cannot win the confidence and respect of your children, forsooth! Let her begin by winning yours, and see what happens then."

"Miss Pinch is getting her bonnet on, I trust, my dear?" said the gentleman.

"I trust she is," said Tom, forestalling the reply. "I have no doubt she is. In the mean time I address myself to you, sir. You made your statement to me, sir; you required to see me for that purpose; and I have a right to answer it. I am not loud or turbulent," said Tom, which was quite true, "though I can scarcely say as much for you, in your manner of addressing yourself to me. And I wish, on my sister's behalf, to state the simple truth."

"You may state anything you like, young man," returned the gentleman, affecting to yawn. "My dear, Miss Pinch's money."

"When you tell me," resumed Tom, who was not the less indignant for keeping himself quiet, "that my sister has no innate power of commanding the respect of your children, I must tell you it is not so; and that she has. She is as well bred, as well taught, as well qualified by nature to command respect, as any hirer of a governess you know. But when you place her at a disadvantage in reference to every servant in your house, how can you suppose, if you have the gift of common sense, that she is not in a tenfold worse position in reference to your daughters?"

"Pretty well! Upon my word," exclaimed the gentleman, "this is pretty well!"

"It is very ill, sir," said Tom. "It is very bad and mean, and wrong and cruel. Respect! I believe young people are

quick enough to observe and imitate; and why or how should they respect whom no one else respects, and everybody slights? And very partial they must grow — oh, very partial! — to their studies, when they see to what a pass proficiency in those same tasks has brought their governess! Respect! Put anything the most deserving of respect before your daughters in the light in which you place her, and you will bring it down as low, no matter what it is!"

"You speak with extreme impertinence, young man," observed the gentleman.

"I speak without passion, but with extreme indignation and contempt for such a course of treatment, and for all who practise it," said Tom. "Why, how can you, as an honest gentleman, profess displeasure or surprise at your daughter telling my sister she is something beggarly and humble, when you are for ever telling her the same thing yourself in fifty plain, outspeaking ways, though not in words; and when your very porter and footman make the same delicate announcement to all comers? As to your suspicion and distrust of her, even of her word, if she is not above their reach, you have no right to employ her."

"No right!" cried the brass-and-copper founder.

"Distinctly not," Tom answered. "If you imagine that the payment of an annual sum of money gives it to you, you immensely exaggerate its power and value. Your money is the least part of your bargain in such a case. You may be punctual in that to half a second on the clock, and yet be Bankrupt. I have nothing more to say," said Tom, much flushed and flustered, now that it was over, "except to crave permission to stand in your garden until my sister is ready."

Not waiting to obtain it, Tom walked out.

Before he had well begun to cool, his sister joined him. She was crying; and Tom could not bear that any one about the house should see her doing that.

"They will think you are sorry to go," said Tom. "You are not sorry to go?"

"No, Tom, no. I have been anxious to go for a very long time."

"Very well, then! Don't cry!" said Tom.

"I am so sorry for *you*, dear," sobbed Tom's sister.

"But you ought to be glad on my account," said Tom. "I

shall be twice as happy with you for a companion. Hold up your head. There! Now we go out as we ought. Not blustering, you know, but firm and confident in ourselves."

The idea of Tom and his sister blustering, under any circumstances, was a splendid absurdity. But Tom was very far from feeling it to be so, in his excitement; and passed out at the gate with such severe determination written in his face that the porter hardly knew him again.

It was not until they had walked some short distance, and Tom found himself getting cooler and more collected, that he was quite restored to himself by an inquiry from his sister, who said in her pleasant little voice: —

"Where are we going, Tom?"

"Dear me!" said Tom stopping, "I don't know."

"Don't you — don't you live anywhere, dear?" asked Tom's sister, looking wistfully in his face.

"No," said Tom. "Not at present. Not exactly. I only arrived this morning. We must have some lodgings."

He didn't tell her that he had been going to stay with his friend John, and could on no account think of billeting two inmates upon him, of whom one was a young lady; for he knew that would make her uncomfortable, and would cause her to regard herself as being an inconvenience to him. Neither did he like to leave her anywhere while he called on John and told him of this change in his arrangements; for he was delicate of seeming to encroach upon the generous and hospitable nature of his friend. Therefore he said again, "We must have some lodgings, of course;" and said it as stoutly as if he had been a perfect Directory and Guide-Book to all the lodgings in London.

"Where shall we go and look for 'em?" said Tom. "What do you think?"

Tom's sister was not much wiser on such a topic than he was. So she squeezed her little purse into his coat-pocket, and folding the little hand with which she did so on the other little hand with which she clasped his arm, said nothing.

"It ought to be a cheap neighbourhood," said Tom, "and not too far from London. Let me see. Should you think Islington a good place?"

"I should think it was an excellent place, Tom."

"It used to be called Merry Islington, once upon a time,"

said Tom. "Perhaps it's merry now; if so, it's all the better. Eh?"

"If it's not too dear," said Tom's sister.

"Of course, if it's not too dear," assented Tom. "Well, where *is* Islington? We can't do better than go there, I should think. Let's go."

Tom's sister would have gone anywhere with him; so they walked off, arm in arm, as comfortably as possible. Finding, presently, that Islington was not in that neighbourhood, Tom made inquiries respecting a public conveyance thither, which they soon obtained. As they rode along they were very full of conversation indeed, Tom relating what had happened to him, and Tom's sister relating what had happened to her, and both finding a great deal more to say than time to say it in; for they had only just begun to talk, in comparison with what they had to tell each other, when they reached their journey's end.

"Now," said Tom, "we must first look out for some very unpretending streets, and then look out for bills in the windows."

So they walked off again, quite as happily as if they had just stepped out of a snug little house of their own, to look for lodgings on account of somebody else. Tom's simplicity was unabated, Heaven knows; but now that he had somebody to rely upon him, he was stimulated to rely a little more upon himself, and was, in his own opinion, quite a desperate fellow.

After roaming up and down for hours, looking at some scores of lodgings, they began to find it rather fatiguing, especially as they saw none which were at all adapted to their purpose. At length, however, in a singular little old-fashioned house, up a blind street, they discovered two small bedrooms and a triangular parlour, which promised to suit them well enough. Their desiring to take possession immediately was a suspicious circumstance, but even this was surmounted by the payment of their first week's rent, and a reference to John Westlock, Esquire, Furnival's Inn, High Holborn.

Ah! It was a goodly sight, when this important point was settled, to behold Tom and his sister trotting round to the baker's, and the butcher's, and the grocer's, with a kind of dreadful delight in the unaccustomed cares of housekeeping; taking secret counsel together as they gave their small orders,

and distracted by the least suggestion on the part of the shopkeeper! When they got back to the triangular parlour, and Tom's sister bustling to and fro, busy about a thousand pleasant nothings, stopped every now and then to give old Tom a kiss or smile upon him, Tom rubbed his hands, as if all Islington were his.

It was late in the afternoon now, though, and high time for Tom to keep his appointment. So, after agreeing with his sister that in consideration of not having dined, they would venture on the extravagance of chops for supper, at nine, he walked out again to narrate these marvellous occurrences to John.

"I am quite a family man all at once," thought Tom. "If I can only get something to do, how comfortable Ruth and I may be! Ah, that if! But it's of no use to despond. I can but do that, when I have tried everything and failed; and even then it won't serve me much. Upon my word," thought Tom, quickening his pace, "I don't know what John will think has become of me. He'll begin to be afraid I have strayed into one of those streets where the countrymen are murdered; and that I have been made meat pies of, or some such horrible thing."

CHAPTER XXXVII

TOM PINCH, GOING ASTRAY, FINDS THAT HE IS NOT THE ONLY PERSON IN THAT PREDICAMENT; HE RETALIATES UPON A FALLEN FOE.

Tom's evil genius did not lead him into the dens of any of those preparers of cannibalic pastry, who are represented in many standard country legends as doing a lively retail business in the Metropolis; nor did it mark him out as the prey of ring-droppers, pea and thimble riggers, duffers, touters, or any of those bloodless sharpers who are, perhaps, a little better known to the Police. He fell into conversation with no gentleman who took him into a public-house, where there happened to be another gentleman who swore he had more money than any gentleman, and very soon proved he had more money than one gentleman by taking his away from him; neither did he fall into any other of the numerous man-traps which are set up, without notice, in the public grounds of this city. But he lost his way. He very soon did that; and in trying to find it again, he lost it more and more.

Now Tom, in his guileless distrust of London, thought himself very knowing in coming to the determination that he would not ask to be directed to Furnival's Inn, if he could help it; unless, indeed, he should happen to find himself near the Mint, or the Bank of England; in which case he would step in and ask a civil question or two, confiding in the perfect respectability of the concern. So on he went, looking up all the streets he came near, and going up half of them; and thus, by dint of not being true to Goswell Street, and filing off into Aldermanbury, and bewildering himself in Barbican, and being constant to the wrong point of the compass in London Wall, and then getting himself crosswise into Thames Street, by an instinct that would have been marvellous if he had had the least desire or reason to go there, he found himself, at last, hard by the Monument.

The Man in the Monument was quite as mysterious a being to Tom as the Man in the Moon. It immediately occurred to him that the lonely creature who held himself aloof from all mankind in that pillar like some old hermit, was the very man of whom to ask his way. Cold he might be; little sympathy he had, perhaps, with human passion — the column seemed too tall for that; but if Truth did n't live in the base of the Monument, notwithstanding Pope's couplet about the outside of it, where in London (Tom thought) was he likely to be found!

Coming close below the pillar, it was a great encouragement to Tom to find that the Man in the Monument had simple tastes; that stony and artificial as his residence was, he still preserved some rustic recollections; that he liked plants, hung up bird-cages, was not wholly cut off from fresh groundsel, and kept young trees in tubs. The man in the Monument himself was sitting outside the door — his own door, the Monument door; what a grand idea! — and was actually yawning, as if there were no Monument to stop his mouth, and give him a perpetual interest in his own existence.

Tom was advancing towards this remarkable creature, to inquire the way to Furnival's Inn, when two people came to see the Monument. They were a gentleman and a lady; and the gentleman said, "How much apiece?"

The Man in the Monument replied, "A Tanner."

It seemed a low expression, compared with the Monument.

The gentleman put a shilling into his hand, and the Man in the Monument opened a dark little door. When the gentleman and lady had passed out of view, he shut it again, and came slowly back to his chair.

He sat down and laughed.

"They don't know what a many steps there is," he said. "It 's worth twice the money to stop here. Oh, my eye!"

The Man in the Monument was a Cynic; a worldly man! Tom couldn't ask his way of *him*. He was prepared to put no confidence in anything he said.

"My gracious!" cried a well-known voice behind Mr. Pinch. "Why, to be sure it is!"

At the same time he was poked in the back by a parasol. Turning round to inquire into this salute, he beheld the eldest daughter of his late patron.

"Miss Pecksniff!" said Tom.

"Why, my goodness, Mr. Pinch!" cried Cherry. "What are you doing here?"

"I have rather wandered from my way," said Tom. "I—"

"I hope you have run away," said Charity. "It would be quite spirited and proper if you had, when my Pa so far forgets himself."

"I have left him," returned Tom. "But it was perfectly understood on both sides. It was not done clandestinely."

"Is he married?" asked Cherry with a spasmodic shake of her chin.

"No, not yet," said Tom colouring, "to tell you the truth, I don't think he is likely to be, if—if Miss Graham is the object of his passion."

"Tcha, Mr. Pinch!" cried Charity, with sharp impatience, "you're very easily deceived. You don't know the arts of which such a creature is capable. Oh! it's a wicked world."

"You are not married?" Tom hinted, to divert the conversation.

"N—no!" said Cherry, tracing out one particular paving stone in Monument Yard with the end of her parasol. "I—but really it's quite impossible to explain. Won't you walk in?"

"You live here, then?" said Tom.

"Yes," returned Miss Pecksniff, pointing with her parasol to Todgers's; "I reside with this lady, *at present.*"

The great stress on the two last words suggested to Tom that he was expected to say something in reference to them. So he said:—

"Only at present! Are you going home again, soon?"

"No, Mr. Pinch," returned Charity. "No thank you. No! A mother-in-law who is younger than—I mean to say, who is as nearly as possible about the same age as one's self, would not quite suit my spirit. Not quite!" said Cherry, with a spiteful shiver.

"I thought from your saying at present"—Tom observed.

"Really, upon my word! I had no idea you would press me so very closely on the subject, Mr. Pinch," said Charity blushing, "or I should not have been so foolish as to allude to— Oh, really!—won't you walk in?"

Tom mentioned, to excuse himself, that he had an appointment in Furnival's Inn, and that coming from Islington he had

taken a few wrong turnings, and arrived at the Monument instead. Miss Pecksniff simpered very much when he asked her if she knew the way to Furnival's Inn, and at length found courage to reply: —

"A gentleman who is a friend of mine, or at least who is not exactly a friend so much as a sort of acquaintance — Oh, upon my word, I hardly know what I say, Mr. Pinch; you must n't suppose there is any engagement between us; or at least if there is, that it is at all a settled thing as yet — is going to Furnival's Inn immediately, I believe upon a little business, and I am sure he would be very glad to accompany you, so as to prevent your going wrong again. You had better walk in. You will very likely find my sister Merry here," she said, with a curious toss of her head, and anything but an agreeable smile.

"Then I think I'll endeavour to find my way alone," said Tom; "for I fear she would not be very glad to see me. That unfortunate occurrence, in relation to which you and I had some amicable words together, in private, is not likely to have impressed her with any friendly feeling towards me. Though it really was not my fault."

"She has never heard of that, you may depend," said Cherry, gathering up the corners of her mouth, and nodding at Tom. "I am far from sure that she would bear you any mighty ill will for it if she had."

"You don't say so?" cried Tom, who was really concerned by this insinuation.

"I say nothing," said Charity. "If I had not already known what shocking things treachery and deceit are in themselves, Mr. Pinch, I might perhaps have learnt it from the success they meet with — from the success they meet with." Here she smiled as before. "But I don't say anything. On the contrary, I should scorn it. You had better walk in!"

There was something hidden here which piqued Tom's interest and troubled his tender heart. When, in a moment's irresolution, he looked at Charity, he could not but observe a struggle in her face between a sense of triumph and a sense of shame; nor could he but remark how, meeting even his eyes, which she cared so little for, she turned away her own, for all the splenetic defiance in her manner.

An uneasy thought entered Tom's head; a shadowy misgiving that the altered relations between himself and Pecksniff

were somehow to involve an altered knowledge on his part other people, and were to give him an insight into m... which he had had no previous suspicion. And yet he ... definite construction upon Charity's proceedings. He ... had no idea that as he had been the audience and spectator of her mortification, she grasped with eager delight at any ... tunity of reproaching her sister with his presence in ... deeper misery; for he knew nothing of it, and only ... that sister as the same giddy, careless, trivial creature ... always had been, with the same slight estimation of ... which she had never been at the least pains to conceal. ... short, he had merely a confused impression that Miss Pe... was not quite sisterly or kind; and being curious to ... right, accompanied her as she desired.

The house door being opened, she went in before T... requesting him to follow her; and led the way to the ... door.

"Oh, Merry!" she said, looking in, "I am so glad you ... not gone home. Who do you think I have met in the ... and brought to see you! Mr. Pinch! There. Now you ... surprised, I am sure!"

Not more surprised than Tom was, when he looked ... her. Not so much; not half so much.

"Mr. Pinch has left papa, my dear," said Cherry, "and ... prospects are quite flourishing. I have promised that Augustus, who is going that way, shall escort him to the place ... wants. Augustus, my child, where are you!"

With these words Miss Pecksniff screamed her way ... the parlour, calling on Augustus Moddle to appear, and ... Tom Pinch alone with her sister.

If she had always been his kindest friend; if she had treated him through all his servitude with such consideration as was never yet received by struggling man; if she had lightened every moment of those many years, and had ever spared a ... never wounded him, his honest heart could not have swelled ... before her with a deeper pity or a purer freedom from all bad remembrance than it did then.

"My gracious me! You are really the last person in the world I should have thought of seeing, I am sure!"

Tom was sorry to hear her speaking in her old manner. He had not expected that. Yet he did not feel it a contradict...

that he should be sorry to see her so unlike her old self, and sorry at the same time to hear her speaking in her old manner. The two things seemed quite natural.

"I wonder you find any gratification in coming to see me. I can't think what put it in your head. I never had much in seeing you. There was no love lost between us, Mr. Pinch, at any time, I think."

Her bonnet lay beside her on the sofa, and she was very busy with the ribbons as she spoke. Much too busy to be conscious of the work her fingers did.

"We never quarrelled," said Tom, — Tom was right in that, for one person can no more quarrel without an adversary than one person can play at chess, or fight a duel, — "I hoped you would be glad to shake hands with an old friend. Don't let us rake up bygones," said Tom. "If I ever offended you, forgive me."

She looked at him for a moment; dropped her bonnet from her hands; spread them before her altered face, and burst into tears.

"Oh, Mr. Pinch!" she said, "although I never used you well, I did believe your nature was forgiving. I did not think you could be cruel."

She spoke as little like her old self now, for certain, as Tom could possibly have wished. But she seemed to be appealing to him reproachfully, and he did not understand her.

"I seldom showed it — never — I know that. But I had that belief in you that if I had been asked to name the person in the world least likely to retort upon me, I would have named you, confidently."

"Would have named me!" Tom repeated.

"Yes," she said with energy, "and I have often thought so."

After a moment's reflection, Tom sat himself upon a chair beside her.

"Do you believe," said Tom, "oh, can you think, that what I said just now, I said with any but the true and plain intention which my words professed? I mean it in the spirit and to the letter. If I ever offended you, forgive me; I may have done so many times. You never injured or offended me. How, then, could I possibly retort, if even I were stern and cold enough to wish to do it!"

After a little while she thanked him through her tears and sobs, and told him she had never been at once so sorry and comforted since she left home. Still she wept bitterly as it was the greater pain to Tom to see her weeping, from standing in especial need, just then, of sympathy and tenderness.

"Come, come!" said Tom, "you used to be as cheerful as the day was long."

"Ah! used!" she cried, in such a tone as rent Tom's heart.

"And will be again," said Tom.

"No, never more. No, never, never more. If you should talk with old Mr. Chuzzlewit, at any time," she added, looking hurriedly into his face — "I sometimes thought he liked me, but suppressed it — will you promise me to tell him that you saw me here, and that I said I bore in mind the time we talked together in the churchyard?"

Tom promised that he would.

"Many times since then, when I have wished I had been carried there before that day, I have recalled his words. I wish that he should know how true they were, although at least acknowledgment to that effect has never passed my lips, and never will."

Tom promised this, conditionally, too. He did not tell her how improbable it was that he and the old man would ever meet again, because he thought it might disturb her more.

"If he should ever know this, through your means, dear Mr. Pinch," said Mercy, "tell him that I sent the message not for myself, but that he might be more forbearing and more patient, and more trustful to some other person in the time of need. Tell him that if he could know how my heart trembled in the balance that day, and what a very little would have turned the scale, his own would bleed with pity for me."

"Yes, yes," said Tom, "I will."

"When I appeared to him the most unworthy of his help I was — I know I was, for I have often, often, thought about it since — the most inclined to yield to what he showed me. Oh! if he had reflected but a little more, if he had thrown himself in my way for but one other quarter of an hour, if he had extended his compassion for a vain, unthinking, worthless girl in but the least degree, he might, and I believe he would have saved her! Tell him that I don't blame him, but —

grateful for the effort that he made; but ask him for the love of God, and youth, and in merciful consideration for the struggle which an ill-advised and unawakened nature makes to hide the strength it thinks its weakness — ask him never, never to forget this, when he deals with one again!"

Although Tom did not hold the clue to her full meaning, he could guess it pretty nearly. Touched to the quick, he took her hand and said, or meant to say, some words of consolation. She felt and understood them, whether they were spoken or not. He was not quite certain, afterwards, but that she had tried to kneel down at his feet, and bless him.

He found that he was not alone in the room when she had left it. Mrs. Todgers was there, shaking her head. Tom had never seen Mrs. Todgers, it is needless to say, but he had a perception of her being the lady of the house; and he saw some genuine compassion in her eyes that won his good opinion.

"Ah, sir! You are an old friend, I see," said Mrs. Todgers.

"Yes," said Tom.

"And yet," quoth Mrs. Todgers, shutting the door softly, "she has n't told you what her troubles are, I 'm certain."

Tom was struck by these words, for they were quite true. "Indeed," he said, "she has not."

"And never would," said Mrs. Todgers, "if you saw her daily. She never makes the least complaint to me, or utters a single word of explanation or reproach. But I know," said Mrs. Todgers, drawing in her breath, "*I* know!"

Tom nodded sorrowfully, "So do I."

"I fully believe," said Mrs. Todgers, taking her pocket-handkerchief from the flat reticule, "that nobody can tell one half of what that poor young creature has to undergo. But though she comes here, constantly, to ease her poor full heart without his knowing it; and saying, 'Mrs. Todgers, I am very low to-day; I think that I shall soon be dead,' sits crying in my room until the fit is past; I know no more from her. And I believe," said Mrs. Todgers, putting back her handkerchief again, "that she considers me a good friend too."

Mrs. Todgers might have said her best friend. Commercial gentlemen and gravy had tried Mrs. Todgers's temper; the human chance — it was such a very small one in her case, that she might have been excused for looking sharp after it, lest it

should entirely vanish from her sight — had taken a f[illegible] on Mrs. Todgers's attention. But in some odd n[illegible] Todgers's breast, up a great many steps, and in a [illegible] to be overlooked, there was a secret door, with "W[illegible] written on the spring, which, at a touch from Mer[illegible] had flown wide open, and admitted her for shelter.

When boarding-house accounts are balanced with a[illegible] ledgers, and the books of the Recording Angel are m[illegible] ever, perhaps there may be seen an entry to thy cr[illegible] Mrs. Todgers, which shall make thee beautiful!

She was growing beautiful so rapidly in Tom's eyes — f[illegible] saw that she was poor, and that this good had sprung [illegible] from among the sordid strivings of her life — that [illegible] have been a very Venus in a minute more, if Miss Pe[illegible] had not entered with her friend.

"Mr. Thomas Pinch!" said Charity, performing the [illegible] of introduction with evident pride, "Mr. Moddle. W[illegible] my sister!"

"Gone, Miss Pecksniff," Mrs. Todgers answered [illegible] had appointed to be home."

"Ah!" said Charity, looking at Tom. "Oh, dear me!"

"She's greatly altered since she's been A[illegible] — [illegible] she's been married, Mrs. Todgers!" observed Moddle.

"My dear Augustus!" said Miss Pecksniff, in a [illegible] "I verily believe you have said that fifty thousand times [illegible] hearing. What a Prose you are!"

This was succeeded by some trifling love passages, w[illegible] appeared to originate with, if not to be wholly carried [illegible] Miss Pecksniff. At any rate, Mr. Moddle was much [illegible] his responses than is customary with young lovers, and ex[illegible]ited a lowness of spirits which was quite oppressive.

He did not improve at all when Tom and he were [illegible] streets, but sighed so dismally that it was dreadful to [illegible] him. As a means of cheering him up, Tom told him that wished him joy.

"Joy!" cried Moddle. "Ha, ha!"

"What an extraordinary young man!" thought Tom.

"The Scorner has not set his seal upon you. [illegible] what becomes of you!" said Moddle.

Tom admitted that it was a subject in which he [illegible] felt some interest.

"I don't," said Mr. Moddle. "The Elements may have me when they please. I 'm ready."

Tom inferred from these and other expressions of the same nature that he was jealous. Therefore he allowed him to take his own course; which was such a gloomy one that he felt a load removed from his mind when they parted company at the gate of Furnival's Inn.

It was now a couple of hours past John Westlock's dinner-time; and he was walking up and down the room, quite anxious for Tom's safety. The table was spread; the wine was carefully decanted; and the dinner smelt delicious.

"Why, Tom, old boy, where on earth have you been? Your box is here. Get your boots off instantly, and sit down!"

"I am sorry to say I can't stay, John," replied Tom Pinch, who was breathless with the haste he had made in running up the stairs.

"Can't stay!"

"If you 'll go on with your dinner," said Tom, "I 'll tell you my reason the while. I must n't eat myself, or I shall have no appetite for the chops."

"There are no chops here, my good fellow."

"No. But there are, at Islington," said Tom.

John Westlock was perfectly confounded by this reply, and vowed he would not touch a morsel until Tom had explained himself fully. So Tom sat down and told him all; to which he listened with the greatest interest.

He knew Tom too well, and respected his delicacy too much, to ask him why he had taken these measures without communicating with him first. He quite concurred in the expediency of Tom's immediately returning to his sister, as he knew so little of the place in which he had left her; and good-humouredly proposed to ride back with him in a cab, in which he might convey his box. Tom's proposition that he should sup with them that night, he flatly rejected, but made an appointment with him for the morrow. "And now, Tom," he said, as they rode along, "I have a question to ask you, to which I expect a manly and straightforward answer. Do you want any money? I am pretty sure you do."

"I don't, indeed," said Tom.

"I believe you are deceiving me."

"No. With many thanks to you, I am quite in cash," Tom replied. "My sister has some money, and so has I. If I had nothing else, John, I have a five-pound note w that good creature, Mrs. Lupin, of the Dragon, handed me outside the coach, in a letter begging me to borr w it, then drove off as hard as she could go."

"And a blessing on every dimple in her handsome f w, I!" cried John; "though why you should give her the p ence over me, I don't know. Never mind. I believe y Tom."

"And I hope you'll continue to hide it," returned T gaily. "For I owe you more, already, in a hundred ways, than I can ever hope to pay."

They parted at the door of Tom's new residence. J Westlock, sitting in the cab, and, catching a glimpse blooming little busy creature darting out to kiss T m and help him with his box, would not have had the least to change places with him.

Well! she *was* a cheerful little thing; and had a q bright quietness about her that was intensely pleasant. S she was the best sauce for chops ever invented. The p seemed to take a pleasure in sending up their grateful before her; the froth upon the pint of porter peeted to her notice. But it was all in vain. She saw n Tom. Tom was the first and last thing in the world.

As she sat opposite to Tom at supper, fingering one Tom's pet tunes upon the table-cloth, and smiling in his f he had never been so happy in his life.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

SECRET SERVICE.

In walking from the City with his sentimental friend, Tom Pinch had looked into the face, and brushed against the threadbare sleeve of Mr. Nadgett, man of mystery to the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company. Mr. Nadgett naturally passed away from Tom's remembrance, as he passed out of his view; for he did n't know him, and had never heard his name.

As there are a vast number of people in the huge metropolis of England who rise up every morning, not knowing where their heads will rest at night, so there are a multitude who, shooting arrows over houses as their daily business, never know on whom they fall. Mr. Nadgett might have passed Tom Pinch ten thousand times; might even have been quite familiar with his face, his name, pursuits, and character; yet never once have dreamed that Tom had any interest in any act or mystery of his. Tom might have done the like by him, of course. But the same private man out of all the men alive was in the mind of each at the same moment; was prominently connected, though in a different manner, with the day's adventures of both; and formed, when they passed each other in the street, the one absorbing topic of their thoughts.

Why Tom had Jonas Chuzzlewit in his mind requires no explanation. Why Mr. Nadgett should have had Jonas Chuzzlewit in his is quite another thing.

But somehow or other that amiable and worthy orphan had become a part of the mystery of Mr. Nadgett's existence. Mr. Nadgett took an interest in his lightest proceedings; and it never flagged or wavered. He watched him in and out of the Insurance Office, where he was now formally installed as a Director; he dogged his footsteps in the streets; he stood listening when he talked; he sat in coffee-rooms entering his name in the great pocket-book, over and over again; he wrote

letters to himself about him constantly; and when he f
them in his pocket, put them in the fire, with e
and caution that he would bend down to watch the
tinder while it floated upward, as if his mind
that the mystery it had contained might come out at the
ney-pot.

And yet all this was quite a secret. Mr. Nadgett k
himself, and kept it close. Jonas had no more
Nadgett's eyes were fixed on him than he had that he
living under the daily inspection and report of a
of Jesuits. Indeed, Mr. Nadgett's eyes were
any other objects than the ground, the clock, or the fire
every button on his coat might have been an eye — he saw
much.

The secret manner of the man disarmed suspicion in
wise; suggesting, not that he was watching any one, but
he thought some other man was watching him. He
about so stealthily, and kept himself so wrapped up in him
that the whole object of his life appeared to be to avoid
and preserve his own mystery. Jonas sometimes saw him
the street, hovering in the outer office, waiting at the door
the man who never came, or slinking off with his
face and drooping head, and the one beaver glove
before him; but he would as soon have thought of the
upon the top of St. Paul's Cathedral taking note of
he did, or slowly winding a great net about his feet, as
Nadgett's being engaged in such an occupation.

Mr. Nadgett made a mysterious change about this
his mysterious life; for whereas he had, until now, been
seen every morning coming down Cornhill, so exactly like
Nadgett of the day before as to occasion a popular belief
he never went to bed or took his clothes off, he was now
seen in Holborn, coming out of Kingsgate Street; and it
soon discovered that he actually went every morning to a
ber's shop in that street to get shaved, and that the barber
name was Swossellepipe. He seemed to make appointm
with the man who never came, to meet him at this barber
for he would frequently take long spells of waiting in
shop, and would ask for pen and ink, and pull out his pa
book, and be very busy over it for an hour at a time. Mr
Gamp and Mr. Swossellepipe had many deep discourses on t.

subject of this mysterious customer; but they usually agreed that he had speculated too much and was keeping out of the way.

He must have appointed the man who never kept his word to meet him at another new place, too; for one day he was found, for the first time, by the waiter at the Mourning Coach-Horse, the house-of-call for Undertakers, down in the City there, making figures with a pipe-stem in the sawdust of a clean spittoon; and declining to call for anything, on the ground of expecting a gentleman presently. As the gentleman was not honourable enough to keep his engagement, he came again next day, with his pocket-book in such a state of distension that he was regarded in the bar as a man of large property. After that, he repeated his visits every day, and had so much writing to do that he made nothing of emptying a capacious leaden inkstand in two sittings. Although he never talked much, still, by being there among the regular customers, he made their acquaintance; and in course of time became quite intimate with Mr. Tacker, Mr. Mould's foreman; and even with Mr. Mould himself, who openly said he was a long-headed man, a dry one, a salt fish, a deep file, a rasper; and made him the subject of many other flattering encomiums.

At the same time, too, he told the people at the Insurance Office, in his own mysterious way, that there was something wrong (secretly wrong, of course) in his liver, and that he feared he must put himself under the doctor's hands. He was delivered over to Jobling upon this representation; and though Jobling could not find out where his liver was wrong, wrong Mr. Nadgett said it was; observing that it was his own liver, and he hoped he ought to know. Accordingly, he became Mr. Jobling's patient; and detailing his symptoms in his slow and secret way, was in and out of that gentleman's room a dozen times a day.

As he pursued all these occupations at once, and all steadily, and all secretly, and never slackened in his watchfulness of everything that Mr. Jonas said and did and left unsaid and undone, it is not improbable that they were, secretly, essential parts of some great secret scheme which Mr. Nadgett had on foot.

It was on the morning of this very day on which so much had happened to Tom Pinch that Nadgett suddenly appeared

before Mr. Montague's house in Pall Mall—he always made his appearance as if he had that moment come up to the door—when the clocks were striking nine. He rang the bell with a covert, underhanded way, as though it were a thing he was ashamed of, and passed in at the door the moment it was opened wide enough to receive his body. That done, he shut it himself softly, with his own hands.

Mr. Bailey, taking up his name without delay, returned with a request that he would follow him into his master's chamber. The chairman of the Anglo-Hebridean Investment Loan and Life Insurance Board was dressing, and received Mr. Nadgett as a business person who was often backwards and forwards, and was received at all times for his business's sake.

"Well, Mr. Nadgett!"

Mr. Nadgett put his hat upon the ground and replied. The boy having withdrawn and shut the door, he went to it softly, examined the handle, and returned to within a pace or two of the chair in which Mr. Montague sat.

"Any news, Mr. Nadgett?"

"I think we have some news at last, sir."

"I am happy to hear it. I began to fear you were at fault, Mr. Nadgett."

"No, sir. It grows cold occasionally. It will sometimes. We can't help that."

"You are truth itself, Mr. Nadgett. Do you expect a great success?"

"That depends upon your judgment and construction of it," was his answer, as he put on his spectacles.

"What do you think of it yourself? Have you pleased yourself?"

Mr. Nadgett rubbed his hands slowly, stroked his chin, looked round the room, and said, "Yes, yes, I think it's a good case. I am disposed to think it's a good case. Will you go into it at once?"

"By all means."

Mr. Nadgett picked out a certain chair from among the rest, and having planted it in a particular spot, as carefully as if he had been going to vault over it, placed another chair in front of it, leaving room for his own legs between them. He then sat down in chair number two, and laid his pocket-book, very carefully, on chair number one. He then untied the pocket-

book, and hung the string over the back of chair number one. He then drew both the chairs a little nearer Mr. Montague, and, opening the pocket-book, spread out its contents. Finally, he selected a certain memorandum from the rest, and held it out to his employer, who, during the whole of these preliminary ceremonies, had been making violent efforts to conceal his impatience.

"I wish you would n't be so fond of making notes, my excellent friend," said Tigg Montague, with a ghastly smile. "I wish you would consent to give me their purport by word of mouth."

"I don't like word of mouth," said Mr. Nadgett gravely. "We never know who 's listening."

Mr. Montague was going to retort, when Nadgett handed him the paper, and said, with quiet exultation in his tone, "We 'll begin at the beginning, and take that one first, if you please, sir."

The chairman cast his eyes upon it, coldly, and with a smile which did not render any great homage to the slow and methodical habits of his spy. But he had not read half a dozen lines when the expression of his face began to change, and, before he had finished the perusal of the paper, it was full of grave and serious attention.

"Number Two," said Mr. Nadgett, handing him another, and receiving back the first. "Read Number Two, sir, if you please. There is more interest as you go on."

Tigg Montague leaned backward in his chair, and cast upon his emissary such a look of vacant wonder (not unmingled with alarm) that Mr. Nadgett considered it necessary to repeat the request he had already twice preferred, with the view of recalling his attention to the point in hand. Profiting by the hint, Mr. Montague went on with Number Two, and afterwards with Numbers Three, and Four, and Five, and so on.

These documents were all in Mr. Nadgett's writing, and were apparently a series of memoranda, jotted down from time to time upon the backs of old letters, or any scrap of paper that came first to hand. Loose straggling scrawls they were, and of very uninviting exterior; but they had weighty purpose in them, if the chairman's face were any index to the character of their contents.

The progress of Mr. Nadgett's secret satisfaction arising out

of the effect they made kept pace with the emotions of the reader. At first, Mr. Nadgett sat with his spectacles low down upon his nose, looking over them at his employer, and nervously rubbing his hands. After a little while, he changed his posture in his chair for one of greater ease, and leisurely perused the next document he held ready, as if an occasional glance at his employer's face were now enough, and all occasion for anxiety or doubt were gone. And finally he rose and looked out of the window, where he stood with a triumphant air, until Tigg Montague had finished.

"And this is the last, Mr. Nadgett!" said that gentleman, drawing a long breath.

"That, sir, is the last."

"You are a wonderful man, Mr. Nadgett!"

"I think it is a pretty good case," he returned, as he gathered up his papers. "It cost some trouble, sir."

"The trouble shall be well rewarded, Mr. Nadgett." Nadgett bowed. "There is a deeper impression of Somebody's Hoof here than I had expected, Mr. Nadgett. I may congratulate myself upon your being such a good hand at a secret."

"Oh! nothing has an interest to me that 's not a secret," replied Nadgett, as he tied the string about his pocket-book, and put it up. "It almost takes away any pleasure I may have had in this inquiry even to make it known to you."

"A most invaluable constitution," Tigg retorted. "A great gift for a gentleman employed as you are, Mr. Nadgett. Much better than discretion, though you possess that quality also in an eminent degree. I think I heard a double-knock. Will you put your head out of window, and tell me whether there is anybody at the door?"

Mr. Nadgett softly raised the sash, and peered out from the very corner, as a man might who was looking down into a street from whence a brisk discharge of musketry might be expected at any moment. Drawing in his head with equal caution, he observed, not altering his voice or manner: —

"Mr. Jonas Chuzzlewit!"

"I thought so," Tigg retorted.

"Shall I go?"

"I think you had better. Stay, though! No! remain here, Mr. Nadgett, if you please."

It was remarkable how pale and flurried he had become in an instant. There was nothing to account for it. His eye had fallen on his razors; but what of them!

Mr. Chuzzlewit was announced.

"Show him up directly. Nadgett! Don't you leave us alone together. Mind you don't, now! By the Lord!" he added in a whisper to himself; "we don't know what may happen."

Saying this, he hurriedly took up a couple of hair-brushes, and began to exercise them on his own head, as if his toilet had not been interrupted. Mr. Nadgett withdrew to the stove in which there was a small fire for the convenience of heating curling-irons; and taking advantage of so favourable an opportunity for drying his pocket-handkerchief, produced it without loss of time. There he stood, during the whole interview, holding it before the bars, and sometimes, but not often, glancing over his shoulder.

"My dear Chuzzlewit!" cried Montague, as Jonas entered, "you rise with the lark. Though you go to bed with the nightingale, you rise with the lark. You have superhuman energy, my dear Chuzzlewit!"

"Ecod!" said Jonas, with an air of languor and ill-humour, as he took a chair, "I should be very glad not to get up with the lark, if I could help it. But I am a light sleeper; and it's better to be up than lying awake, counting the dismal old church clocks, in bed."

"A light sleeper!" cried his friend. "Now, what is a light sleeper? I often hear the expression, but upon my life I have not the least conception what a light sleeper is."

"Hallo!" said Jonas; "who's that! Oh, old what's-his-name; looking (as usual) as if he wanted to skulk up the chimney."

"Ha, ha! I have no doubt he does."

"Well! He's not wanted here, I suppose," said Jonas. "He may go, may n't he?"

"Oh, let him stay, let him stay!" said Tigg. "He's a mere piece of furniture. He has been making his report, and is waiting for further orders. He has been told," said Tigg, raising his voice, "not to lose sight of certain friends of ours, or to think that he has done with them by any means. He understands his business."

"He need," replied Jonas; "for of all the precious old dummies in appearance that ever I saw, he 's about the worst. He 's afraid of me, I think."

"It 's my belief," said Tigg, "that you are Poison to him. Nadgett! give me that towel!"

He had as little occasion for a towel as Jonas had for a start. But Nadgett brought it quickly; and having lingered for a moment, fell back upon his old post by the fire.

"You see, my dear fellow," resumed Tigg, "you are too — what 's the matter with your lips? How white they are!"

"I took some vinegar just now," said Jonas. "I had oysters for my breakfast. Where are they white?" he added, muttering an oath, and rubbing them upon his handkerchief. "I don't believe they *are* white."

"Now I look again, they are not," replied his friend. "They are coming right again."

"Say what you were going to say," cried Jonas angrily, "and let my face be! As long as I can show my teeth when I want to (and I can do that pretty well), the colour of my lips is not material."

"Quite true," said Tigg. "I was only going to say that you are too quick and active for our friend. He is too shy to cope with such a man as you, but does his duty well. Oh, very well! But what is a light sleeper?"

"Hang a light sleeper!" exclaimed Jonas pettishly.

"No, no," interrupted Tigg. "No; we 'll not do that."

"A light sleeper ain't a heavy one," said Jonas in his sulky way; "don't sleep much, and don't sleep well, and don't sleep sound."

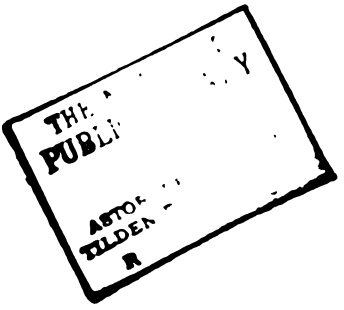
"And dreams," said Tigg, "and cries out in an ugly manner; and when the candle burns down in the night, is in an agony; and all that sort of thing. I see!"

They were silent for a little time. Then Jonas spoke: —

"Now we 've done with child's talk, I want to have a word with you. I want to have a word with you before we meet up yonder to-day. I am not satisfied with the state of affairs."

"Not satisfied!" cried Tigg. "The money comes in well."

"The money comes in well enough," retorted Jonas; "but it don't come out well enough. It can't be got at, easily enough. I have n't sufficient power; it 's all in your hands. Ecod! what with one of your by-laws, and another of your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by-laws, and your votes in this capacity, and your votes in that capacity, and your official rights, and your individual rights, and other people's rights who are only you again, there are no rights left for me. Everybody else's rights are my wrongs. What 's the use of my having a voice if it 's always drowned? I might as well be dumb, and it would be much less aggravating. I 'm not a going to stand that, you know."

"No!" said Tigg in an insinuating tone.

"No!" returned Jonas, "I 'm not, indeed. I 'll play Old Gooseberry with the office, and make you glad to buy me out at a good high figure, if you try any of your tricks with me."

"I give you my honour — " Montague began.

"Oh! confound your honour," interrupted Jonas, who became more coarse and quarrelsome as the other remonstrated, which may have been a part of Mr. Montague's intention; "I want a little more control over the money. You may have all the honour, if you like; I 'll never bring you to book for that. But I 'm not a going to stand it, as it is now. If you should take it into your honourable head to go abroad with the bank, I don't see much to prevent you. Well! That won't do. I 've had some very good dinners here, but they 'd come too dear on such terms; and therefore, that won't do."

"I am unfortunate to find you in this humour," said Tigg, with a remarkable kind of smile; "for I was going to propose to you — for your own advantage; solely for your own advantage — that you should venture a little more with us."

"Was you, by G—?" said Jonas, with a short laugh.

"Yes. And to suggest," pursued Montague, "that surely you have friends — indeed, I know you have — who would answer our purpose admirably, and whom we should be delighted to receive."

"How kind of you! You 'd be delighted to receive 'em, would you?" said Jonas bantering.

"I give you my sacred honour, quite transported. As your friends, observe!"

"Exactly," said Jonas; "as my friends, of course. You 'll be very much delighted when you get 'em, I have no doubt. And it 'll be all to my advantage, won't it?"

"It will be very much to your advantage," answered Montague, poising a brush in each hand, and looking steadily upon him. "It will be very much to your advantage, I assure you."

"And you can tell me how," said Jonas, "can't you?"

"SHALL I tell you how?" returned the other.

"I think you had better," said Jonas. "Strange things have been done in the Insurance way before now, by strange sorts of men, and I mean to take care of myself."

"Chuzzlewit!" replied Montague, leaning forward, with his arms upon his knees, and looking full into his face. "Strange things have been done, and are done every day, not only in our way, but in a variety of other ways, and no one suspects them. But ours, as you say, my good friend, is a strange way; and we strangely happen, sometimes, to come into the knowledge of very strange events."

He beckoned to Jonas to bring his chair nearer; and looking slightly round, as if to remind him of the presence of Nadgett, whispered in his ear.

From red to white; from white to red again; from red to yellow; then to a cold, dull, awful, sweat-bedabbled blue. In that short whisper, all these changes fell upon the face of Jonas Chuzzlewit; and when at last he laid his hand upon the whisperer's mouth, appalled, lest any syllable of what he said should reach the ears of the third person present, it was as bloodless and as heavy as the hand of Death.

He drew his chair away, and sat a spectacle of terror, misery, and rage. He was afraid to speak, or look, or move, or sit still. Abject, crouching, and miserable, he was a greater degradation to the form he bore than if he had been a loathsome wound from head to heel.

His companion leisurely resumed his dressing, and completed it, glancing sometimes with a smile at the transformation he had effected, but never speaking once.

"You 'll not object," he said, when he was quite equipped, "to venture further with us, Chuzzlewit, my friend?"

His pale lips faintly stammered out a "No."

"Well said! That 's like yourself. Do you know I was thinking yesterday that your father-in-law, relying on your advice as a man of great sagacity in money matters, as no doubt you are, would join us, if the thing were well presented to him. He has money?"

"Yes, he has money."

"Shall I leave Mr. Pecksniff to you? Will you undertake for Mr. Pecksniff?"

"I 'll try. I 'll do my best."

"A thousand thanks," replied the other, clapping him upon the shoulder. "Shall we walk down stairs? Mr. Nadgett! Follow us, if you please."

They went down in that order. Whatever Jonas felt in reference to Montague; whatever sense he had of being caged, and barred, and trapped, and having fallen down into a pit of deepest ruin; whatever thoughts came crowding on his mind, even at that early time, of one terrible chance of escape, of one red glimmer in a sky of blackness, — he no more thought that the slinking figure half a dozen stairs behind him was his pursuing Fate than that the other figure at his side was his Good Angel.

CHAPTER XXXIX

CONTAINING SOME FURTHER PARTICULARS OF THE DOMESTIC ECONOMY OF THE PINCHES: WITH STRANGE NEWS FROM THE CITY, NARROWLY CONCERNING TOM.

Pleasant little Ruth! Cheerful, tidy, bustling, quiet little Ruth! No doll's house ever yielded greater delight to its young mistress than little Ruth derived from her glorious dominion over the triangular parlour and the two small bedrooms.

To be Tom's housekeeper! What dignity! Housekeeping, upon the commonest terms, associated itself with elevated responsibilities of all sorts and kinds; but housekeeping for Tom implied the utmost complication of grave trusts and mighty charges. Well might she take the keys out of the little chiffonier which held the tea and sugar; and out of the two little damp cupboards down by the fireplace, where the very black beetles got mouldy, and had the shine taken out of their backs by envious mildew; and jingle them upon a ring before Tom's eyes when he came down to breakfast! Well might she, laughing musically, put them up in that blessed little pocket of hers with a merry pride! For it was a grand novelty to be mistress of anything that, if she had been the most relentless and despotic of all little housekeepers, she might have pleaded just that much for her excuse, and have been honourably acquitted.

So far from being despotic, however, there was a coyness about her very way of pouring out the tea, which Tom quite revelled in. And when she asked him what he would like to have for dinner, and faltered out "chops" as a reasonably good suggestion after their last night's successful supper, Tom grew quite facetious and rallied her desperately.

"I don't know, Tom," said his sister blushing, "I am not quite confident, but I think I could make a beef-steak pudding, if I tried, Tom."

"In the whole catalogue of cookery, there is nothing I should like so much as a beefsteak pudding," cried Tom; slapping his leg to give the greater force to this reply.

"Yes, dear, that 's excellent! But if it should happen not to come quite right the first time," his sister faltered; "if it should happen not to be a pudding exactly, but should turn out a stew, or a soup, or something of that sort, you 'll not be vexed, Tom, will you?"

The serious way in which she looked at Tom, the way in which Tom looked at her, and the way in which she gradually broke into a merry laugh at her own expense, would have enchanted you.

"Why," said Tom, "this is capital. It gives us a new, and quite an uncommon interest in the dinner. We put into a lottery for a beefsteak pudding, and it is impossible to say what we may get. We may make some wonderful discovery, perhaps, and produce such a dish as never was known before."

"I shall not be at all surprised if we do, Tom," returned his sister, still laughing merrily, "or if it should prove to be such a dish as we shall not feel very anxious to produce again; but the meat must come out of the saucepan at last, somehow or other, you know. We can't cook it into nothing at all; that 's a great comfort. So if you like to venture, *I* will."

"I have not the least doubt," rejoined Tom, "that it will come out an excellent pudding; or at all events, I am sure that I shall think so. There is naturally something so handy and brisk about you, Ruth, that if you said you could make a bowl of faultless turtle soup, I should believe you."

And Tom was right. She was precisely that sort of person. Nobody ought to have been able to resist her coaxing manner; and nobody had any business to try. Yet she never seemed to know it was her manner at all; that was the best of it.

Well! she washed up the breakfast cups, chatting away the whole time, and telling Tom all sorts of anecdotes about the brass and copper founder; put everything in its place; made the room as neat as herself (you must not suppose its shape was half as neat as hers, though, or anything like it), and brushed Tom's old hat round and round and round again, until it was as sleek as Mr. Pecksniff. Then she discovered, all in a moment, that Tom's shirt-collar was frayed at the edge; and flying up stairs for a needle and thread, came flying down again with her

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thimble on, and set it right with wonderful expertness; never once sticking the needle into his face, although she was humming his pet tune from first to last, and beating time with the fingers of her left hand upon his neckcloth. She had no sooner done this than off she was again; and there she stood once more, as brisk and busy as a bee, tying that compact little chin of hers into an equally compact little bonnet; intent on bustling out to the butcher's, without a minute's loss of time; and inviting Tom to come and see the steak cut, with his own eyes. As to Tom, he was ready to go anywhere; so, off they trotted, arm in arm, as nimbly as you please; saying to each other what a quiet street it was to lodge in, and how very cheap, and what an airy situation.

To see the butcher slap the steak, before he laid it on the block, and give his knife a sharpening, was to forget breakfast instantly. It was agreeable, too, — it really was, — to see him cut it off so smooth and juicy. There was nothing savage in the act, although the knife was large and keen; it was a piece of art, high art; there was delicacy of touch, clearness of tone, skilful handling of the subject, fine shading. It was the triumph of mind over matter; quite.

Perhaps the greenest cabbage-leaf ever grown in a garden was wrapped about this steak before it was delivered over to Tom. But the butcher had a sentiment for his business, and knew how to refine upon it. When he saw Tom putting the cabbage-leaf into his pocket awkwardly, he begged to be allowed to do it for him; "for meat," he said, with some emotion, "must be humoured, not drove."

Back they went to the lodgings again, after they had bought some eggs, and flour, and such small matters; and Tom sat gravely down to write at one end of the parlour table, while Ruth prepared to make the pudding at the other end; for there was nobody in the house but an old woman (the landlord being a mysterious sort of man, who went out early in the morning, and was scarcely ever seen); and, saving in mere household drudgery, they waited on themselves.

"What are you writing, Tom?" inquired his sister, laying her hand upon his shoulder.

"Why, you see, my dear," said Tom, leaning back in his chair, and looking up in her face, "I am very anxious, of course, to obtain some suitable employment; and before Mr.

Westlock comes this afternoon, I think I may as well prepare a little description of myself and my qualifications; such as he could show to any friend of his."

"You had better do the same for me, Tom, also," said his sister, casting down her eyes. "I should dearly like to keep house for you, and take care of you always, Tom; but we are not rich enough for that."

"We are not rich," returned Tom, "certainly; and we may be much poorer. But we will not part, if we can help it. No, no; we will make up our minds, Ruth, that, unless we are so very unfortunate as to render me quite sure that you would be better off away from me than with me, we will battle it out together. I am certain we shall be happier if we can battle it out together. Don't you think we shall?"

"Think, Tom!"

"Oh, tut, tut!" interposed Tom tenderly. "You must n't cry."

"No, no; I won't, Tom. But you can't afford it, dear. You can't, indeed."

"We don't know that," said Tom. "How are we to know that, yet awhile, and without trying? Lord bless my soul!" Tom's energy became quite grand; "there is no knowing what may happen, if we try hard. And I am sure we can live contentedly upon a very little — if we can only get it."

"Yes; that I am sure we can, Tom."

"Why, then," said Tom, "we must try for it. My friend, John Westlock, is a capital fellow, and very shrewd and intelligent. I 'll take his advice. We 'll talk it over with him — both of us together. You 'll like John very much, when you come to know him, I am certain. Don't cry, don't cry. *You* make a beefsteak pudding, indeed!" said Tom, giving her a gentle push. "Why, you have n't boldness enough for a dumpling!"

"You *will* call it a pudding, Tom. Mind! I told you not!"

"I may as well call it that till it proves to be something else," said Tom. "Oh, you are going to work in earnest, are you?"

Ay, ay! That she was. And in such pleasant earnest, moreover, that Tom's attention wandered from his writing every moment. First, she tripped down stairs into the kitchen for

the flour, then for the pie-board, then for the eggs, then for the butter, then for a jug of water, then for the rolling-pin, then for a pudding-basin, then for the pepper, then for the salt; making a separate journey for everything, and laughing every time she started off afresh. When all the materials were collected, she was horrified to find she had no apron on, and so ran *up* stairs, by way of variety, to fetch it. She didn't put it on up stairs, but came dancing down with it in her hand; and being one of those little women to whom an apron is a most becoming little vanity, it took an immense time to arrange; having to be carefully smoothed down beneath — Oh, heaven, what a wicked little stomacher! and to be gathered up into little plaits by the strings before it could be tied, and to be tapped, rebuked, and wheedled, at the pockets, before it would set right, which at last it did, and when it did — but never mind; this is a sober chronicle. And then there were cuffs to be tucked up, for fear of flour; and she had a little ring to pull off her finger, which wouldn't come off (foolish little ring!); and during the whole of these preparations she looked demurely every now and then at Tom, from under her dark eyelashes as if they were all a part of the pudding, and indispensable to its composition.

For the life and soul of him, Tom could get no further in his writing than, "A respectable young man aged thirty-five," and this, notwithstanding the show she made of being supernaturally quiet, and going about on tiptoe, lest she should disturb him; which only served as an additional means of distracting his attention, and keeping it upon her.

"Tom," she said at last, in high glee. "Tom!"

"What now?" said Tom, repeating to himself, "aged thirty-five!"

"Will you look here a moment, please?"

As if he hadn't been looking all the time!

"I am going to begin, Tom. Don't you wonder why I butter the inside of the basin?" said his busy little sister.

"Not more than you do, I dare say," replied Tom laughing. "For I believe you don't know anything about it."

"What an infidel you are, Tom! How else do you think it would turn out easily when it was done? For a civil-engineer and land-surveyor not to know that! My goodness, Tom!"

It was wholly out of the question to try to write. Tom

filled out "A respectable young man, aged thirty-five;" and sat looking on, pen in hand, with one of the most loving smiles imaginable.

Such a busy little woman as she was! So full of self-importance, and trying so hard not to smile, or seem uncertain about anything! It was a perfect treat to Tom to see her with her brows knit, and her rosy lips pursed up, kneading away at the crust, rolling it out, cutting it up into strips, lining the basin with it, shaving it off fine round the rim, chopping up the steak into small pieces, raining down pepper and salt upon them, packing them into the basin, pouring in cold water for gravy, and never venturing to steal a look in his direction, lest her gravity should be disturbed; until, at last, the basin being quite full and only wanting the top crust, she clapped her hands, all covered with paste and flour, at Tom, and burst out heartily into such a charming little laugh of triumph that the pudding need have had no other seasoning to commend it to the taste of any reasonable man on earth.

"Where's the pudding?" said Tom. For he was cutting his jokes, Tom was.

"Where!" she answered, holding it up with both hands. "Look at it!"

"*That* a pudding!" said Tom.

"It will be, you stupid fellow, when it's covered in," returned his sister. Tom still pretending to look incredulous, she gave him a tap on the head with the rolling-pin, and still laughing merrily, had returned to the composition of the top crust, when she started and turned very red. Tom started, too, for, following her eyes, he saw John Westlock in the room.

"Why, my goodness, John! How did *you* come in?"

"I beg pardon," said John — "your sister's pardon especially — but I met an old lady at the street door, who requested me to enter here; and as you did n't hear me knock, and the door was open, I made bold to do so. I hardly know," said John, with a smile, "why any of us should be disconcerted at my having accidentally intruded upon such an agreeable domestic occupation, so very agreeably and skilfully pursued; but I must confess that *I* am. Tom, will you kindly come to my relief?"

"Mr. John Westlock," said Tom. "My sister."

"I hope that, as the sister of so old a friend," said John, laughing, "you will have the goodness to detach your first impressions of me from my unfortunate entrance."

"My sister is not indisposed, perhaps, to say the same to you on her own behalf," retorted Tom.

John said, of course, that this was quite unnecessary, for he had been transfixed in silent admiration; and he held out his hand to Miss Pinch; who could n't take it, however, by reason of the flour and paste upon her own. This, which might seem calculated to increase the general confusion and render matters worse, had in reality the best effect in the world, for neither of them could help laughing; and so they both found themselves on easy terms immediately.

"I am delighted to see you," said Tom. "Sit down."

"I can only think of sitting down, on one condition," returned his friend; "and that is that your sister goes on with the pudding, as if you were still alone."

"That I am sure she will," said Tom, "on one other condition, and that is, that you stay and help us to eat it."

Poor little Ruth was seized with a palpitation of the heart when Tom committed this appalling indiscretion, for she felt that, if the dish turned out a failure, she never would be able to hold up her head before John Westlock again. Quite unconscious of her state of mind, John accepted the invitation with all imaginable heartiness; and after a little more pleasantry concerning this same pudding, and the tremendous expectations he made believe to entertain of it, she blushingly resumed her occupation, and he took a chair.

"I am here much earlier than I intended, Tom; but I will tell you what brings me, and I think I can answer for your being glad to hear it. Is that anything you wish to show me?"

"Oh, dear, no!" cried Tom, who had forgotten the blotted scrap of paper in his hand, until this inquiry brought it to his recollection. "'A respectable young man, aged thirty-five' — the beginning of a description of myself. That 's all."

"I don't think you will have occasion to finish it, Tom. But how is it, you never told me you had friends in London?"

Tom looked at his sister with all his might; and certainly his sister looked with all her might at him.

"Friends in London!" echoed Tom.

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"Ah!" said Westlock, "to be sure."

"Have *you* any friends in London, Ruth, my dear?" asked Tom.

"No, Tom."

"I am very happy to hear that *I* have," said Tom, "but it's news to me. I never knew it. They must be capital people to keep a secret, John."

"You shall judge for yourself," returned the other. "Seriously, Tom, here is the plain state of the case. As I was sitting at breakfast this morning, there comes a knock at my door."

"On which you cried out, very loud, 'Come in!'" suggested Tom.

"So I did. And the person who knocked, not being a respectable young man aged thirty-five, from the country, came in when he was invited, instead of standing gaping and staring about him on the landing. Well! When he came in, I found he was a stranger; a grave, business-like, sedate-looking, stranger. 'Mr. Westlock?' said he. 'That is my name,' said I. 'The favour of a few words with you?' said he. 'Pray be seated, sir,' said I."

Here John stopped for an instant to glance towards the table, where Tom's sister, listening attentively, was still busy with the basin, which by this time made a noble appearance. Then he resumed: —

"The pudding having taken a chair, Tom —"

"What!" cried Tom.

"Having taken a chair."

"You said a pudding."

"No, no," replied John, colouring rather; "a chair. The idea of a stranger coming into my rooms at half-past eight o'clock in the morning, and taking a pudding! Having taken a chair, Tom, a chair — amazed me by opening the conversation thus: 'I believe you are acquainted, sir, with Mr. Thomas Pinch?'"

"No!" cried Tom.

"His very words, I assure you. I told him I was. Did I know where you were at present residing? Yes. In London? Yes. He had casually heard, in a roundabout way, that you had left your situation with Mr. Pecksniff. Was that the fact? Yes, it was. Did you want another? Yes, you did."

"Certainly," said Tom, nodding his head.

"Just what I impressed upon him. You may rest assured that I set that point beyond the possibility of any mistake, and gave him distinctly to understand that he might make up his mind about it. Very well."

"'Then,' said he, 'I think I can accommodate him.'"

Tom's sister stopped short.

"Lord bless me!" cried Tom. "Ruth, my dear, 'think I can accommodate him.'"

"Of course I begged him," pursued John Westlock, glancing at Tom's sister, who was not less eager in her interest than Tom himself, "to proceed, and said that I would undertake to see you immediately. He replied that he had very little to say, being a man of few words, but such as it was, it was to the purpose — and so, indeed, it turned out; for he immediately went on to tell me that a friend of his was in want of a kind of secretary and librarian; and that although the salary was small, being only a hundred pounds a year, with neither board nor lodging, still the duties were not heavy, and there the post was, vacant, and ready for your acceptance."

"Good gracious me!" cried Tom; "a hundred pounds a year! My dear John! Ruth, my love! A hundred pounds a year!"

"But the strangest part of the story," resumed John Westlock, laying his hand on Tom's wrist, to bespeak his attention, and repress his ecstacies for the moment: "the strangest part of the story, Miss Pinch, is this. I don't know this man from Adam; neither does this man know Tom."

"He can't," said Tom, in great perplexity, "if he 's a Londoner. I don't know any one in London."

"And on my observing," John resumed, still keeping his hand upon Tom's wrist, "that I had no doubt he would excuse the freedom I took, in inquiring who directed him to me; how he came to know of the change which had taken place in my friend's position; and how he came to be acquainted with my friend's peculiar fitness for such an office as he had described; he drily said that he was not at liberty to enter into any explanations."

"Not at liberty to enter into any explanations!" repeated Tom, drawing a long breath.

"'I must be perfectly aware,' he said, John added, "'that to any person who had ever been in Mr. Pecksniff's neighbour-

...ell, Mr. Thomas Pinch and his acquirements were as well known as the church steeple, or the Blue Dragon.'"

"The Blue Dragon!" repeated Tom, staring alternately at his friend and his sister.

"Ay; think of that! He spoke as familiarly of the Blue Dragon, I give you my word, as if he had been Mark Tapley. I opened my eyes, I can tell you, when he did so; but I could not fancy I had ever seen the man before, although he said with a smile, 'You know the Blue Dragon, Mr. Westlock; you kept it up there, once or twice, yourself.' Kept it up there! So I did. You remember, Tom?"

Tom nodded with great significance, and, falling into a state of deeper perplexity than before, observed that this was the most unaccountable and extraordinary circumstance he had ever heard of in his life.

"Unaccountable?" his friend repeated. "I became afraid of the man. Though it was broad day, and bright sunshine, I was positively afraid of him. I declare I half suspected him to be a supernatural visitor, and not a mortal, until he took out a commonplace description of pocket-book and handed me this card."

"Mr. Fips," said Tom, reading it aloud; "Austin Friars. Austin Friars sounds ghostly, John."

"Fips don't, I think," was John's reply. "But there he lives, Tom, and there he expects us to call this morning. And now you know as much of this strange incident as I do, upon my honour."

Tom's face, between his exultation in the hundred pounds a year, and his wonder at this narration, was only to be equalled by the face of his sister, on which there sat the very best expression of blooming surprise that any painter could have wished to see. What the beefsteak pudding would have come to, if it had not been by this time finished, astrology itself could hardly determine.

"Tom," said Ruth, after a little hesitation, "perhaps Mr. Westlock, in his friendship for you, knows more of this than he chooses to tell."

"No, indeed!" cried John eagerly. "It is not so, I assure you. I wish it were. I cannot take credit to myself, Miss Pinch, for any such thing. All that I know, or, so far as I can judge, am likely to know, I have told you."

"Could n't you know more, if you thought proper?" said Ruth, scraping the pie-board industriously.

"No," retorted John. "Indeed, no. It is very ungenerous in you to be so suspicious of me, when I repose implicit faith in you. I have unbounded confidence in the pudding, Miss Pinch."

She laughed at this, but they soon got back into a serious vein, and discussed the subject with profound gravity. Whatever else was obscure in the business, it appeared to be quite plain that Tom was offered a salary of one hundred pounds a year; and this being the main point, the surrounding obscurity rather set it off than otherwise.

Tom, being in a great flutter, wished to start for Austin Friars instantly, but they waited nearly an hour, by John's advice, before they departed. Tom made himself as spruce as he could before leaving home, and when John Westlock, through the half-opened parlour door, had glimpses of that brave little sister brushing the collar of his coat in the passage, taking up loose stitches in his gloves, and hovering lightly about and about him, touching him up here and there in the height of her quaint, little, old-fashioned tidiness, he called to mind the fancy portraits of her on the wall of the Pecksniffian work-room, and decided with uncommon indignation that they were gross libels, and not half pretty enough; though, as hath been mentioned in its place, the artists always made those sketches beautiful, and he had drawn at least a score of them with his own hands.

"Tom," he said, as they were walking along, "I begin to think you must be somebody's son."

"I suppose I am," Tom answered in his quiet way.

"But I mean somebody's of consequence."

"Bless your heart," replied Tom, "my poor father was of no consequence, nor my mother either."

"You remember them perfectly, then?"

"Remember them? oh, dear, yes. My poor mother was the last. She died when Ruth was a mere baby, and then we both became a charge upon the savings of that good old grandmother I used to tell you of. You remember! Oh! There 's nothing romantic in our history, John."

"Very well," said John in quiet despair. "Then there is no way of accounting for my visitor of this morning. So we 'll not try, Tom."

They did try, notwithstanding, and never left off trying until they got to Austin Friars, where, in a very dark passage on the first floor, oddly situated at the back of a house, across some leads, they found a little blear-eyed glass door up in one corner, with MR. FIPS painted on it in characters which were meant to be transparent. There was also a wicked old sideboard hiding in the gloom hard by, meditating designs upon the ribs of visitors; and an old mat, worn into lattice work, which, being useless as a mat (even if anybody could have seen it, which was impossible), had for many years directed its industry into another channel, and regularly tripped up every one of Mr. Fips's clients.

Mr. Fips, hearing a violent concussion between a human hat and his office door, was apprised, by the usual means of communication, that somebody had come to call upon him, and having that somebody admission, observed that it was "rather dark."

"Dark indeed," John whispered in Tom Pinch's ear. "Not a bad place to dispose of a countryman in, I should think, Tom."

Tom had been already turning over in his mind the possibility of their having been tempted into that region to furnish forth a pie; but the sight of Mr. Fips, who was small and spare, and looked peaceable, and wore black shorts and powder, dispelled his doubts.

"Walk in," said Mr. Fips.

They walked in. And a mighty yellow-jaundiced little office Mr. Fips had of it — with a great, black, sprawling splash upon the floor in one corner, as if some old clerk had cut his throat there, years ago, and had let out ink instead of blood.

"I have brought my friend Mr. Pinch, sir," said John Westlock.

"Be pleased to sit," said Mr. Fips.

They occupied the two chairs, and Mr. Fips took the office stool, from the stuffing whereof he drew forth a piece of horsehair of immense length, which he put into his mouth with a great appearance of appetite.

He looked at Tom Pinch curiously, but with an entire freedom from any such expression as could be reasonably construed into an unusual display of interest. After a short silence, during which Mr. Fips was so perfectly unembarrassed as to

render it manifest that he could have broken it sooner without hesitation, if he had felt inclined to do so, he asked if Mr. Westlock had made his offer fully known to Mr. Pinch.

John answered in the affirmative.

"And you think it worth your while, sir, do you?" Mr. Fips inquired of Tom.

"I think it a piece of great good fortune, sir," said Tom. "I am exceedingly obliged to you for the offer."

"Not to me," said Mr. Fips. "I act upon instructions."

"To your friend, sir, then," said Tom. "To the gentleman with whom I am to engage, and whose confidence I shall endeavour to deserve. When he knows me better, sir, I hope he will not lose his good opinion of me. He will find me punctual and vigilant, and anxious to do what is right. That I think I can answer for, and so," looking towards him, "can Mr. Westlock."

"Most assuredly," said John.

Mr. Fips appeared to have some little difficulty in resuming the conversation. To relieve himself, he took up the wafer-stamp, and began stamping capital F's all over his legs.

"The fact is," said Mr. Fips, "that my friend is not, at this present moment, in town."

Tom's countenance fell; for he thought this equivalent to telling him that his appearance did not answer; and that Fips must look out for somebody else.

"When do you think he will be in town, sir?" he asked.

"I can't say; it 's impossible to tell. I really have no idea. But," said Fips, taking off a very deep impression of the wafer-stamp upon the calf of his left leg, and looking steadily at Tom, "I don't know that it 's a matter of much consequence."

Poor Tom inclined his head deferentially, but appeared to doubt that.

"I say," repeated Mr. Fips, "that I don't know it 's a matter of much consequence. The business lies entirely between yourself and me, Mr. Pinch. With reference to your duties, I can set you going; and with reference to your salary, I can pay it. Weekly," said Mr. Fips, putting down the wafer-stamp, and looking at John Westlock and Tom Pinch by turns, "weekly; in this office; at any time between the hours of four and five o'clock in the afternoon." As Mr. Fips said

this, he made up his face as if he were going to whistle. But he did n't.

"You are very good," said Tom, whose countenance was now suffused with pleasure; "and nothing can be more satisfactory or straightforward. My attendance will be required — "

"From half-past nine to four o'clock or so, I should say," interrupted Mr. Fips. "About that."

"I did not mean the hours of attendance," retorted Tom, "which are light and easy, I am sure; but the place."

"Oh, the place! The place is in the Temple."

Tom was delighted.

"Perhaps," said Mr. Fips, "you would like to see the place?"

"Oh, dear!" cried Tom. "I shall only be too glad to consider myself engaged, if you will allow me; without any further reference to the place."

"You may consider yourself engaged, by all means," said Mr. Fips; "you could n't meet me at the Temple Gate in Fleet Street, in an hour from this time, I suppose, could you?"

Certainly Tom could.

"Good," said Mr. Fips rising. "Then I will show you the place; and you can begin your attendance to-morrow morning. In an hour, therefore, I shall see you. You too, Mr. Westlock? Very good. Take care how you go. It 's rather dark."

With this remark, which seemed superfluous, he shut them out upon the staircase, and they groped their way into the street again. The interview had done so little to remove the mystery in which Tom's new engagement was involved, and had done so much to thicken it, that neither could help smiling at the puzzled looks of the other. They agreed, however, that the introduction of Tom to his new office and office companions could hardly fail to throw a light upon the subject; and therefore postponed its further consideration until after the fulfilment of the appointment they had made with Mr. Fips.

After looking in at John Westlock's chambers, and devoting a few spare minutes to the Boar's Head, they issued forth again to the place of meeting. The time agreed upon had not quite come; but Mr. Fips was already at the Temple Gate, and expressed his satisfaction at their punctuality.

He led the way through sundry lanes and courts into one more quiet and more gloomy than the rest, and singling out a certain house, ascended a common staircase; taking from his pocket, as he went, a bunch of rusty keys. Stopping before a door upon an upper story, which had nothing but a yellow smear of paint where custom would have placed the tenant's name, he began to beat the dust out of one of these keys, very deliberately, upon the great broad hand-rail of the balustrade.

"You had better have a little plug made," he said, looking round at Tom, after blowing a shrill whistle into the barrel of the key. "It 's the only way of preventing them from getting stopped up. You 'll find the lock go the better, too, I dare say, for a little oil."

Tom thanked him; but was too much occupied with his own speculations, and John Westlock's looks, to be very talkative. In the mean time Mr. Fips opened the door, which yielded to his hand very unwillingly, and with a horribly discordant sound. He took the key out when he had done so, and gave it to Tom.

"Ay, ay!" said Mr. Fips. "The dust lies rather thick here."

Truly, it did. Mr. Fips might have gone so far as to say, very thick. It had accumulated everywhere; lay deep on everything; and in one part, where a ray of sun shone through a crevice in the shutter and struck upon the opposite wall, it went twirling round and round, like a gigantic squirrel-cage.

Dust was the only thing in the place that had any motion about it. When their conductor admitted the light freely, and lifting up the heavy window-sash, let in the summer air, he showed the mouldering furniture, discoloured wainscoting and ceiling, rusty stove, and ashy hearth, in all their inert neglect. Close to the door there stood a candlestick, with an extinguisher upon it: as if the last man who had been there had paused, after securing a retreat, to take a parting look at the dreariness he left behind, and then had shut out light and life together, and closed the place up like a tomb.

There were two rooms on that floor; and in the first or outer one a narrow staircase leading to two more above. These last were fitted up as bed-chambers. Neither in them, nor in the rooms below, was any scarcity of convenient furniture observable, although the fittings were of a bygone fashion; but soli-

le and want of use seemed to have rendered it unfit for any ..poses of comfort, and to have given it a grisly, haunted air. Movables of every kind lay strewn about, without the least ...mpt at order, and were intermixed with boxes, hampers, ...l all sorts of lumber. On all the floors were piles of books, ... the amount perhaps of some thousands of volumes: these ...ll in bales; those wrapped in paper, as they had been pur...sed; others scattered singly or in heaps; not one upon the ...lves which lined the walls. To these Mr. Fips called Tom's ...ention.

"Before anything else can be done, we must have them put ... order, catalogued and ranged upon the book-shelves, Mr. Pinch. That will do to begin with, I think, sir."

Tom rubbed his hands in the pleasant anticipation of a task ... congenial to his taste, and said:—

"An occupation full of interest for me, I assure you. It will occupy me, perhaps until Mr. ——"

"Until Mr. ——" repeated Fips; as much as to ask Tom what he was stopping for.

"I forgot that you had not mentioned the gentleman's name," said Tom.

"Oh!" cried Mr. Fips, pulling on his glove, "did n't I? No, by the bye, I don't think I did. Ah! I dare say he 'll be here soon. You will get on very well together, I have no doubt. I wish you success, I am sure. You won't forget to shut the door? It 'll lock of itself if you slam it. Half-past nine, you know. Let us say from half-past nine to four, or half-past four, or thereabouts; one day perhaps a little earlier, another day perhaps a little later, according as you feel disposed, and as you arrange your work. Mr. Fips, Austin Friars, of course you 'll remember? And you won't forget to slam the door, if you please?"

He said all this in such a comfortable, easy manner, that Tom could only rub his hands, and nod his head, and smile in acquiescence, which he was still doing when Mr. Fips walked coolly out.

"Why, he 's gone!" cried Tom.

"And what 's more, Tom," said John Westlock, seating himself upon a pile of books, and looking up at his astonished friend, "he is evidently not coming back again; so here you are, installed. Under rather singular circumstances, Tom!"

It was such an odd affair throughout, and Tom standing there among the books with his hat in one hand and the key in the other, looked so prodigiously confounded, that his friend could not help laughing heartily. Tom himself was tickled; no less by the hilarity of his friend, than by the recollection of the sudden manner in which he had been brought to a stop, in the very height of his urbane conference with Mr. Fips; so, by degrees Tom burst out laughing too; and each making the other laugh more, they fairly roared.

When they had had their laugh out, which did not happen very soon, for, give John an inch in that way, and he was sure to take several ells, being a jovial, good-tempered fellow, they looked about them more closely, groping among the lumber for any stray means of enlightenment that might turn up. But no scrap or shred of information could they find. The books were marked with a variety of owners' names, having, no doubt, been bought at sales, and collected here and there at different times; but whether any one of these names belonged to Tom's employer, and, if so, which of them, they had no means whatever of determining. It occurred to John as a very bright thought, to make inquiry at the steward's office, to whom the chambers belonged, or by whom they were held; but he came back no wiser than he went, the answer being, "Mr. Fips, of Austin Friars."

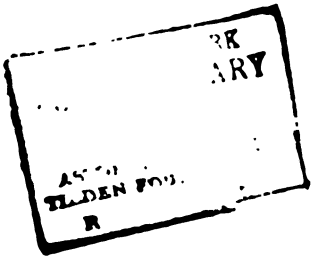
"After all, Tom, I begin to think it lies no deeper than this. Fips is an eccentric man; has some knowledge of Pecksniff; despises him, of course; has heard or seen enough of you to know that you are the man he wants; and engages you in his own whimsical manner."

"But why in his own whimsical manner?" asked Tom.

"Oh! why does any man entertain his own whimsical taste? Why does Mr. Fips wear shorts and powder, and Mr. Fips's next door neighbour boots and a wig?"

Tom, being in that state of mind in which any explanation is a great relief, adopted this last one (which indeed was quite as feasible as any other) readily, and said he had no doubt of it. Nor was his faith at all shaken by his having said exactly the same thing to each suggestion of his friend's, in turn, and being perfectly ready to say it again if he had had any new solution to propose.

As he had not, Tom drew down the window sash, and folded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the shutter; and they left the rooms. He closed the door heavily, as Mr. Fips had desired him; tried it, found it all fast, and put the key in his pocket.

They made a pretty wide circuit in going back to Islington, as they had time to spare, and Tom was never tired of looking about him. It was well he had John Westlock for his companion, for most people would have been weary of his perpetual stoppages at shop-windows, and his frequent dashes into the crowded carriage-way at the peril of his life, to get the better view of church steeples, and other public buildings. But John was charmed to see him so much interested, and every time Tom came back with a beaming face from among the wheels of carts and hackney-coaches, wholly unconscious of the personal congratulations addressed to him by the drivers, John seemed to like him better than before.

There was no flour on Ruth's hands when she received them in the triangular parlour, but there were pleasant smiles upon her face, and a crowd of welcomes shining out of every smile, and gleaming in her bright eyes. By the bye, how bright they were! Looking into them for but a moment, when you took her hand, you saw, in each, such a capital miniature of yourself, representing you as such a restless, flashing, eager, brilliant little fellow —

Ah! if you could only have kept them for your own miniature! But, wicked, roving, restless, too impartial eyes, it was enough for any one to stand before them, and straightway, there he danced and sparkled quite as merrily as you!

The table was already spread for dinner; and though it was spread with nothing very choice in the way of glass or linen, and with green-handled knives, and very mountebanks of two-pronged forks, which seemed to be trying how far asunder they could possibly stretch their legs, without converting themselves into double the number of iron toothpicks, it wanted neither damask, silver, gold, nor china; no, nor any other garniture at all. There it was; and, being there, nothing else would have done as well.

The success of that initiative dish, that first experiment of hers in cookery, was so entire, so unalloyed and perfect, that John Westlock and Tom agreed she must have been studying the art in secret for a long time past; and urged her to make a full confession of the fact. They were exceedingly merry

over this jest, and many smart things were said concerning it; but John was not as fair in his behaviour as might have been expected, for, after luring Tom Pinch on, for a long time, he suddenly went over to the enemy, and swore to everything his sister said. However, as Tom observed the same night before going to bed, it was only in joke, and John had always been famous for being polite to ladies, even when he was quite a boy. Ruth said, "Oh, indeed!" She did n't say anything else.

It is astonishing how much three people may find to talk about. They scarcely left off talking once. And it was not all lively chat which occupied them; for, when Tom related how he had seen Mr. Pecksniff's daughters, and what a change had fallen on the younger, they were very serious.

John Westlock became quite absorbed in her fortunes; asking many questions of Tom Pinch about her marriage, inquiring whether her husband was the gentleman whom Tom had brought to dine with him at Salisbury; in what degree of relationship they stood towards each other, being different persons; and taking, in short, the greatest interest in the subject. Tom then went into it, at full length; he told how Martin had gone abroad, and had not been heard of for a long time; how Dragon Mark had borne him company; how Mr. Pecksniff had got the poor old doting grandfather into his power; and how he basely sought the hand of Mary Graham. But not a word said Tom of what lay hidden in his heart; his heart, so deep, and true, and full of honour, and yet with so much room for every gentle and unselfish thought; not a word.

Tom, Tom! The man in all this world most confident in his sagacity and shrewdness; the man in all this world most proud of his distrust of other men, and having most to show in gold and silver as the gains belonging to his creed; the meekest favourer of that wise doctrine, Every man for himself, and God for us all (there being high wisdom in the thought that the Eternal Majesty of Heaven ever was, or can be, on the side of selfish lust and love!); shall never find, oh, never find, be sure of that, the time come home to him, when all his wisdom is an idiot's folly, weighed against a simple heart!

Well, well, Tom, it was simple, too, though simple in a different way, to be so eager touching that same theatre, of which John said, when tea was done, he had the absolute com-

mand, so far as taking parties in without the payment of a sixpence was concerned; and simpler yet, perhaps, never to suspect that when he went in first alone he paid the money! Simple in thee, dear Tom, to laugh and cry so heartily at such a sorry show, so poorly shown; simple, to be so happy and loquacious trudging home with Ruth; simple, to be so surprised to find that merry present of a cookery book, awaiting her in the parlour next morning, with the beefsteak-pudding-leaf turned down, and blotted out. There! Let the record stand! Thy quality of soul was simple, simple; quite contemptible, Tom Pinch!

CHAPTER XL

THE PINCHES MAKE A NEW ACQUAINTANCE, AND HAVE FRESH OCCASION FOR SURPRISE AND WONDER.

THERE was a ghostly air about these uninhabited chambers in the Temple, and attending every circumstance of Tom's employment there, which had a strange charm in it. Every morning when he shut his door at Islington, he turned his face towards an atmosphere of unaccountable fascination, as surely as he turned it to the London smoke; and from that moment it thickened round and round him all day long, until the time arrived for going home again, and leaving it, like a motionless cloud, behind.

It seemed to Tom, every morning, that he approached this ghostly mist, and became enveloped in it, by the easiest succession of degrees imaginable. Passing from the roar and rattle of the streets into the quiet court-yards of the Temple was the first preparation. Every echo of his footsteps sounded to him like a sound from the old walls and pavements, wanting language to relate the histories of the dim, dismal rooms; to tell him what lost documents were decaying in forgotten corners of the shut-up cellars, from whose lattices such mouldy sighs came breathing forth as he went past; to whisper of dark bins of rare old wine, bricked up in vaults among the old foundations of the Halls; or mutter in a lower tone yet darker legends of the cross-legged knights, whose marble effigies were in the church. With the first planting of his foot upon the staircase of his dusty office, all these mysteries increased; until, ascending step by step as Tom ascended, they attained their full growth in the solitary labours of the day.

Every day brought one recurring, never-failing source of speculation. This employer: would he come to-day, and what would he be like? For Tom could not stop short at Mr. Fips; he quite believed that Mr. Fips had spoken truly, when he said he acted for another; and what manner of man that other

was, became a full-blown flower of wonder in the garden of Tom's fancy, which never faded or got trodden down.

At one time he conceived that Mr. Pecksniff, repenting of his falsehood, might, by exertion of his influence with some third person, have devised these means of giving him employment. He found this idea so insupportable after what had taken place between that good man and himself, that he confided it to John Westlock on the very same day; informing John that he would rather ply for hire as a porter, than fall so low in his own esteem as to accept the smallest obligation from the hands of Mr. Pecksniff. But John assured him that he (Tom Pinch) was far from doing justice to the character of Mr. Pecksniff yet, if he supposed that gentleman capable of performing a generous action; and that he might make his mind quite easy on that head, until he saw the sun turn green and the moon black, and at the same time distinctly perceived with the naked eye twelve first-rate comets careering round those planets. In which unusual state of things, he said (and not before), it might become not absolutely lunatic to suspect Mr. Pecksniff of anything so monstrous. In short he laughed the idea down completely; and Tom, abandoning it, was thrown upon his beam-ends again for some other solution.

In the mean time Tom attended to his duties daily, and made considerable progress with the books: which were already reduced to some sort of order, and made a great appearance in his fairly-written catalogue. During his business hours he indulged himself occasionally with snatches of reading; which were often, indeed, a necessary part of his pursuit; and as he usually took bold to carry one of these goblin volumes home at night (always bringing it back again next morning, in case his strange employer should appear and ask what had become of it), he led a happy, quiet, studious kind of life, after his own heart.

But, though the books were never so interesting, and never so full of novelty to Tom, they could not so enchain him, in those mysterious chambers, as to render him unconscious for a moment of the lightest sound. Any footstep on the flags without set him listening attentively, and when it turned into that house, and came up, up, up the stairs, he always thought with a beating heart, "Now I am coming face to face with him, at last!" But no footstep ever passed the floor immediately below, except his own.

This mystery and loneliness engendered fancies in Tom's mind, the folly of which his common sense could readily discover, but which his common sense was quite unable to keep away notwithstanding; that quality being with most of us, in such a case, like the old French Police — quick at detection, but very weak as a preventive power. Misgivings, undefined, absurd, inexplicable, that there was some one hiding in the inner room — walking softly overhead, peeping in through the door-chink, doing something stealthy, anywhere where he was not — came over him a hundred times a day, making it pleasant to throw up the sash, and hold communication even with the sparrows who had built in the roof and water spout, and were twittering about the windows all day long.

He sat with the outer door wide open, at all times, that he might hear the footsteps as they entered, and turned off into the chambers on the lower floors. He formed odd prepossessions too, regarding strangers in the streets; and would say within himself of such or such a man who struck him as having anything uncommon in his dress or aspect, "I should n't wonder, now, if that were he!" But it never was. And though he actually turned back and followed more than one of these suspected individuals, in a singular belief that they were going to the place he was then upon his way from, he never got any other satisfaction by it than the satisfaction of knowing it was not the case.

Mr. Fips, of Austin Friars, rather deepened than illumined the obscurity of his position; for, on the first occasion of Tom's waiting on him to receive his weekly pay, he said: —

"Oh! by the bye, Mr. Pinch, you need n't mention it, if you please!"

Tom thought he was going to tell him a secret; so he said that he would n't on any account, and that Mr. Fips might entirely depend upon him. But as Mr. Fips said "Very good," in reply, and nothing more, Tom prompted him: —

"Not on any account," repeated Tom.

Mr. Fips repeated, "Very good."

"You were going to say" — Tom hinted.

"Oh dear, no!" cried Fips. "Not at all." However, seeing Tom confused, he added, "I mean that you need n't mention any particulars about your place of employment to people generally. You 'll find it better not."

"I have not had the pleasure of seeing my employer yet, sir," observed Tom, putting his week's salary in his pocket.

"Haven't you?" said Fips. "No, I don't suppose you have, though."

"I should like to thank him, and to know that what I have done so far is done to his satisfaction," faltered Tom.

"Quite right," said Mr. Fips, with a yawn. "Highly creditable. Very proper."

Tom hastily resolved to try him on another tack.

"I shall soon have finished with the books," he said. "I hope that will not terminate my engagement, sir, or render me useless."

"Oh, dear, no!" retorted Fips. "Plenty to do; plen-ty to do! Be careful how you go. It's rather dark."

This was the very utmost extent of information Tom could ever get out of *him*. So it was dark enough in all conscience; and if Mr. Fips expressed himself with a double meaning he had good reason for doing so.

But now a circumstance occurred which helped to divert Tom's thoughts from even this mystery, and to divide them between it and a new channel, which was a very Nile in itself.

The way it came about was this. Having always been an early riser, and having now no organ to engage him in sweet converse every morning, it was his habit to take a long walk before going to the Temple; and naturally inclining as a stranger towards those parts of the town which were conspicuous for the life and animation pervading them, he became a great frequenter of the market-places, bridges, quays, and especially the steamboat wharves; for it was very lively and fresh to see the people hurrying away upon their many schemes of business or pleasure, and it made Tom glad to think that there was that much change and freedom in the monotonous routine of city lives.

In most of these morning excursions Ruth accompanied him. As their landlord was always up and away at his business (whatever that might be, no one seemed to know) at a very early hour, the habits of the people of the house in which they lodged corresponded with their own. Thus they had often finished their breakfast and were out in the summer air by seven o'clock. After a two hours' stroll they parted at

some convenient point — Tom going to the Temple, and his sister returning home, as methodically as you please.

Many and many a pleasant stroll they had in Covent Garden Market, — snuffing up the perfume of the fruits and flowers, wondering at the magnificence of the pine-apples and melons; catching glimpses down side-avenues of rows and rows of old women, seated on inverted baskets, shelling peas; looking unutterable things at the fat bundles of asparagus with which the dainty shops were fortified as with a breastwork; and at the herbalists' doors gratefully inhaling scents as of veal-stuffing yet uncooked, dreamily mixed up with capsicums, brown-paper, seeds — even with hints of lusty snails and fine young curly leeches. Many and many a pleasant stroll they had among the poultry markets, where ducks and fowls with necks unnaturally long lay stretched out in pairs, ready for cooking; where there were speckled eggs in mossy baskets, white country sausages beyond impeachment by surviving cat or dog, or horse or donkey, new cheeses to any wild extent, live birds in coops and cages, looking much too big to be natural in consequence of those receptacles being much too little; rabbits, alive and dead, innumerable. Many a pleasant stroll they had among the cool, refreshing, silvery fish-stalls, with a kind of moonlight effect about their stock in trade excepting always for the ruddy lobsters. Many a pleasant stroll among the wagon-loads of fragrant hay, beneath which dogs and tired wagoners lay fast asleep, oblivious of the pieman and the public-house. But never half so good a stroll as down among the steamboats on a bright morning.

There they lay, alongside of each other; hard and fast for ever to all appearance, but designing to get out somehow and quite confident of doing it; and in that faith shoals of passengers and heaps of luggage were proceeding hurriedly on board. Little steamboats dashed up and down the stream incessantly. Tiers upon tiers of vessels, scores of masts, labyrinths of tackle, idle sails, splashing oars, gliding row-boats, lumbering barges, sunken piles, with ugly lodgings for the water-rat within their mud-discoloured nooks; church steeples, warehouses, house-roofs, arches, bridges, men and women, children, casks, cranes, boxes, horses, coaches, idlers, and hard-labourers — there they were, all jumbled up together, any summer morning, far beyond Tom's power of separation.

In the midst of all this turmoil, there was an incessant roar from every packet's funnel, which quite expressed and carried out the uppermost emotion of the scene. They all appeared to be perspiring and bothering themselves, exactly as their passengers did; they never left off fretting and chafing, in their own hoarse manner, once; but were always panting out, without any stops, "Come along do make haste I'm very nervous come along oh good gracious we shall never get there how late you are do make haste I'm off directly come along!"

Even when they had left off, and had got safely out into the current, on the smallest provocation they began again; for the bravest packet of them all, being stopped by some entanglement in the river, would immediately begin to fume and pant afresh, "Oh here's a stoppage what's the matter do go on there I'm in a hurry it's done on purpose did you ever oh my goodness *do* go on there!" and so, in a state of mind bordering on distraction, would be last seen drifting slowly through the mist into the summer light beyond, that made it red.

Tom's ship, however, or, at least, the packet-boat in which Tom and his sister took the greatest interest on one particular occasion, was not off yet, by any means; but was at the height of its disorder. The press of passengers was very great; another steamboat lay on each side of her; the gangways were choked up; distracted women, obviously bound for Gravesend, but turning a deaf ear to all representations that this particular vessel was about to sail for Antwerp, persisted in secreting baskets of refreshments behind bulk-heads and water-casks, and under seats; and very great confusion prevailed.

It was so amusing that Tom, with Ruth upon his arm, stood looking down from the wharf, as nearly regardless as it was in the nature of flesh and blood to be of an elderly lady behind him, who had brought a large umbrella with her, and didn't know what to do with it. This tremendous instrument had a hooked handle; and its vicinity was first made known to him by a painful pressure on the windpipe, consequent upon its having caught him round the throat. Soon after disengaging himself with perfect good humour, he had a sensation of the ferule in his back; immediately afterwards, of the hook entangling his ankles; then of the umbrella generally wandering about his hat, and flapping at it like a great bird; and,

lastly, of a poke or thrust below the ribs, which gave him such exceeding anguish, that he could not refrain from turning round, to offer a mild remonstrance.

Upon his turning round, he found the owner of the umbrella struggling, on tiptoe, with a countenance expressive of violent animosity, to look down upon the steamboats; from which he inferred that she had attacked him, standing in the front row, by design, as her natural enemy.

"What a very ill-natured person you must be!" said Tom.

The lady cried out fiercely, "Where's the pelisse!" — meaning the constabulary — and went on to say, shaking the handle of the umbrella at Tom, that but for them fellers never being in the way when they was wanted, she'd have given him in charge, she would.

"If they greased their whiskers less, and minded the duties which they're paid so heavy for, a little more," she observed, "no one need n't be drove mad by scrouding so!"

She had been grievously knocked about, no doubt, for her bonnet was bent into the shape of a cocked hat. Being a fat little woman, too, she was in a state of great exhaustion and intense heat. Instead of pursuing the altercation, therefore, Tom civilly inquired what boat she wanted to go on board of.

"I suppose," returned the lady, "as nobody but yourself can want to look at a steam package, without wanting to go a boarding of it, can they! Booby!"

"Which one do you want to look at then?" said Tom. "We 'll make room for you if we can. Don't be so ill-tempered."

"No blessed creetur as ever I was with in trying times," returned the lady, somewhat softened, "and they're a many in their numbers, ever brought it as a charge again myself that I was anythin' but mild and equal in my spirits. Never mind a contradicting of me, if you seems to feel it does you good, ma'am, I often says, for well you know that Sairey may be trusted not to give it back again. But I will not denige that I am worrited and wexed this day, and with good reagion, Lord forbid!"

By this time, Mrs. Gamp (for it was no other than that experienced practitioner) had, with Tom's assistance, squeezed and worked herself into a small corner between Ruth and the rail; where, after breathing very hard for some little time, and

performing a short series of dangerous evolutions with the umbrella, she managed to establish herself pretty comfortably.

"And which of all them smoking monsters is the Ankworks boat, I wonder, Goodness me!" cried Mrs. Gamp.

"What boat did you want?" asked Ruth.

"The Ankworks package," Mrs. Gamp replied. "I will not deceive you, my sweet. Why should I?"

"That is the Antwerp packet in the middle," said Ruth.

"And I wish it was in Jonadge's belly, I do," cried Mrs. Gamp; appearing to confound the prophet with the whale in this miraculous aspiration.

Ruth said nothing in reply; but, as Mrs. Gamp, laying her chin against the cool iron of the rail, continued to look intently at the Antwerp boat, and every now and then to give a little groan, she inquired whether any child of hers was going abroad that morning? Or perhaps her husband, she said kindly.

"Which shows," said Mrs. Gamp, casting up her eyes, "what a little way you've travelled into this wale of life, my dear young creetur! As a good friend of mine has frequent made remark to me, which her name, my love, is Harris, Mrs. Harris through the square and up the steps a turnin' round by the tobacker shop, 'Oh, Sairey, Sairey, little do we know wot lays afore us!' 'Mrs. Harris ma'am,' I says, 'not much, it's true, but more than you suppoge. Our calcilations, ma'am,' I says, 'respectin' wot the number of a family will be, comes most times within one, and oftener than you would suppoge, exact.' 'Sairey,' says Mrs. Harris, in an awful way, 'Tell me wot is my indiwidgle number.' 'No, Mrs. Harris,' I says to her, 'ex-cuge me, if you please. My own,' I says, 'has fallen out of three-pair backs, and had damp doorsteps settled on their lungs, and one was turned up smilin' in a bedstead unbeknown. Therefore, ma'am,' I says, 'seek not to proticipate, but take 'em as they come and as they go.' Mine," said Mrs. Gamp, "mine is all gone, my dear young chick. And as to husbands, there's a wooden leg gone likeways home to its account, which in its constancy of walkin' into wine vaults, and never comin' out again 'till fetched by force, was quite as weak as flesh, if not weaker."

When she had delivered this oration, Mrs. Gamp leaned her chin upon the cool iron again; and looking intently at the Antwerp packet, shook her head and groaned.

"I would n't," said Mrs. Gamp, "I would n't be a man and have such a think upon my mind! — but nobody as owned the name of man could do it!"

Tom and his sister glanced at each other; and Ruth, after a moment's hesitation, asked Mrs. Gamp what troubled her so much.

"My dear," returned that lady, dropping her voice, "you are single, ain't you?"

Ruth laughed, blushed, and said, "Yes."

"Worse luck," proceeded Mrs. Gamp, "for all parties! But others is married, and in the marriage state; and there is a dear young creetur a comin' down this mornin' to that very package, which is no more fit to trust herself to sea than nothin' is!"

She paused here, to look over the deck of the packet in question, and on the steps leading down to it, and on the gangways. Seeming to have thus assured herself that the object of her commiseration had not yet arrived, she raised her eyes gradually up to the top of the escape-pipe, and indignantly apostrophised the vessel: —

"Oh, drat you!" said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her umbrella at it, "you 're a nice spluttering nisy monster for a delicate young creetur to go and be a passinger by, ain't you! *You* never do no harm in that way, do you? With your hammering, and roaring, and hissing, and lamp-iling, you brute! Them Confugion steamers," said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her umbrella again, "has done more to throw us out of our reg'lar work and bring ewents on at times when nobody counted on 'em (especially them screeching railroad ones), than all the other frights that ever was took. I have heerd of one young man, a guard upon a railway, only three year opened — well does Mrs. Harris know him, which indeed he is her own relation by her sister's marriage with a master sawyer — as is godfather at this present time to six-and-twenty blessed little strangers, equally unexpected, and all on 'em named after the Ingeins as was the cause. Ugh!" said Mrs. Gamp, resuming her apostrophe, "one might easy know you was a man's invention, from your disregardlessness of the weakness of our naturs, so one might, you brute!"

It would not have been unnatural to suppose, from the first part of Mrs. Gamp's lamentations, that she was connected with

the stage-coaching or post-horsing trade. She had no means of judging of the effect of her concluding remarks upon her young companion; for she interrupted herself at this point, and exclaimed: —

"There she identically goes! Poor sweet young creetur, there she goes, like a lamb to the sacrifige! If there 's any likeness when that wessel gets to sea," said Mrs. Gamp prophetically, "it 's murder, and I 'm the witness for the persecution."

She was so very earnest on the subject, that Tom's sister (being as kind as Tom himself) could not help saying something to her in reply.

"Pray which is the lady," she inquired, "in whom you are so much interested?"

"There!" groaned Mrs. Gamp. "There she goes! A crossin' the little wooden bridge at this minute. She 's a slippin' on a bit of orange-peel!" tightly clutching her umbrella. "What a turn it give me!"

"Do you mean the lady who is with that man wrapped up from head to foot in a large cloak, so that his face is almost hidden?"

"Well he may hide it!" Mrs. Gamp replied. "He 's good call to be ashamed of himself. Did you see him a jerking of her wrist, then?"

"He seems to be hasty with her, indeed."

"Now he 's a taking of her down into the close cabin!" said Mrs. Gamp impatiently. "What 's the man about! The deuce is in him, I think. Why can't he leave her in the open air!"

He did not, whatever his reason was, but led her quickly down and disappeared himself, without loosening his cloak, or pausing on the crowded deck one moment longer than was necessary to clear their way to that part of the vessel.

Tom had not heard this little dialogue, for his attention had been engaged in an unexpected manner. A hand upon his sleeve had caused him to look round, just when Mrs. Gamp concluded her apostrophe to the steam-engine; and on his right arm, Ruth being on his left, he found their landlord; to his great surprise.

He was not so much surprised at the man's being there, as at his having got close to him so quietly and swiftly; for another person had been at his elbow one instant before; and

he had not in the mean time been conscious of any change or pressure in the knot of people among whom he stood. He and Ruth had frequently remarked how noiselessly this landlord of theirs came into and went out of his own house; but Tom was not the less amazed to see him at his elbow now.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Pinch," he said in his ear. "I am rather infirm, and out of breath, and my eyes are not very good. I am not as young as I was, sir. You don't see a gentleman in a large cloak down yonder, with a lady on his arm; a lady in a veil and a black shawl; do you?"

If *he* did not, it was curious that in speaking he should have singled out from all the crowd the very people whom he described, and should have glanced hastily from them to Tom, as if he were burning to direct his wandering eyes.

"A gentleman in a large cloak!" said Tom, "and a lady in a black shawl! Let me see!"

"Yes, yes!" replied the other, with keen impatience. "A gentleman muffled up from head to foot — strangely muffled up for such a morning as this — like an invalid, with his hand to his face at this minute, perhaps. No, no, no! not there," he added, following Tom's gaze; "the other way, in that direction — down yonder." Again he indicated, but this time in his hurry with his outstretched finger, the very spot on which the progress of these persons was checked at that moment.

"There are so many people, and so much motion, and so many objects," said Tom, "that I find it difficult to — no, I really don't see a gentleman in a large cloak, and a lady in a black shawl. There 's a lady in a red shawl over there!"

"No, no, no!" cried his landlord, pointing eagerly again, "not there. The other way — the other way. Look at the cabin steps. To the left. They must be near the cabin steps. Do you see the cabin steps? There 's the bell ringing already! *Do* you see the steps?"

"Stay!" said Tom, "you 're right. Look! there they go now. Is that the gentleman you mean? Descending at this minute, with the folds of a great cloak trailing down after him?"

"The very man!" returned the other, not looking at what Tom pointed out, however, but at Tom's own face. "Will you do me a kindness, sir, a great kindness? Will you put that letter in his hand? Only give him that? He expects it.

I am charged to do it by my employers, but I am late in finding him, and, not being as young as I have been, should never be able to make my way on board and off the deck again in time. Will you pardon my boldness, and do me that great kindness?"

His hands shook, and his face bespoke the utmost interest and agitation, as he pressed the letter upon Tom, and pointed to its destination, like the Tempter in some grim old carving.

To hesitate in the performance of a good-natured or compassionate office was not in Tom's way. He took the letter; whispered Ruth to wait till he returned, which would be immediately, and ran down the steps with all the expedition he could make. There were so many people going down, so many others coming up, such heavy goods in course of transit to and fro, such a ringing of bells, blowing-off of steam, and shouting of men's voices, that he had much ado to force his way, or keep in mind to which boat he was going. But he reached the right one with good speed, and, going down the main-stairs immediately, descried the object of his search standing at the upper end of the saloon, with his back towards him, reading some notice which was hung against the wall. As Tom advanced to give him the letter, he started, hearing footsteps, and turned round.

What was Tom's astonishment to find in him the man with whom he had had the conflict in the field — poor Mercy's husband! — Jonas!

Tom understood him to say, what the devil did he want; but it was not easy to make out what he said, he spoke so indistinctly.

"I want nothing with you for myself," said Tom; "I was asked, a moment since, to give you this letter. You were pointed out to me, but I didn't know you in your strange dress. Take it!"

He did so, opened it, and read the writing on the inside. The contents were evidently very brief; not more perhaps than one line; but they struck him like a stone from a sling. He staggered back as he read.

His emotion was so different from any Tom had ever seen before, that he stopped involuntarily. Momentary as his state of indecision was, the bell ceased while he stood there, and a

hoarse voice calling down the steps, inquired if there was any one to go ashore.

"Yes," cried Jonas, "I — I am coming. Give me time. Where 's that woman! Come back; come back here."

He threw open another door as he spoke, and dragged, rather than led, her forth. She was pale and frightened, and amazed to see her old acquaintance; but had no time to speak, for they were making a great stir above, and Jonas drew her rapidly towards the deck.

"Where are we going? What is the matter?"

"We are going back," said Jonas. "I have changed my mind; I can't go. Don't question me, or I shall be the death of you, or some one else. Stop there! Stop! We 're for the shore. Do you hear? We 're for the shore!"

He turned, even in the madness of his hurry, and scowling darkly back at Tom, shook his clenched hand at him. There are not many human faces capable of the expression with which he accompanied that gesture.

He dragged her up, and Tom followed them. Across the deck, over the side, along the crazy plank, and up the steps, he dragged her fiercely; not bestowing any look on her, but gazing upwards all the while among the faces on the wharf. Suddenly he turned again, and said to Tom with a tremendous oath:

"Where is he?"

Before Tom, in his indignation and amazement, could return an answer to a question he so little understood, a gentleman approached Tom behind, and saluted Jonas Chuzzlewit by name. He was a gentleman of foreign appearance, with a black moustache and whiskers; and addressed him with a polite composure, strangely different from his own distracted and desperate manner.

"Chuzzlewit, my good fellow!" said the gentleman, raising his hat in compliment to Mrs. Chuzzlewit, "I ask your pardon twenty thousand times. I am most unwilling to interfere between you and a domestic trip of this nature (always so very charming and refreshing, I know, although I have not the happiness to be a domestic man myself, which is the great infelicity of my existence); but the bee-hive, my dear friend, the bee-hive — Will you introduce me?"

"This is Mr. Montague," said Jonas, whom the words appeared to choke.

"The most unhappy and most penitent of men, Mrs. Chuzzlewit," pursued that gentleman, "for having been the means of spoiling this excursion; but as I tell my friend, the bee-hive; the bee-hive. You projected a short little continental trip, my dear friend, of course?"

Jonas maintained a dogged silence.

"May I die," cried Montague, "but I am shocked! Upon my soul I am shocked. But that confounded bee-hive of ours in the city must be paramount to every other consideration, when there is honey to be made; and that is my best excuse. Here is a very singular old female dropping curtseys on my right," said Montague, breaking off in his discourse, and looking at Mrs. Gamp, "who is not a friend of mine. Does anybody know her?"

"Ah! Well they knows me, bless their precious hearts!" said Mrs. Gamp, "not forgettin' your own merry one, sir, and long may it be so! Wishin' as every one" (she delivered this in the form of a toast or sentiment) "was as merry, and as handsome-looking, as a little bird has whispered me a certain gent is, which I will not name for fear I give offence where none is doo! My precious lady," here she stopped short in her merriment, for she had until now affected to be vastly entertained, "you 're too pale by half!"

"*You* are here too, are you?" muttered Jonas. "Ecod, there are enough of you."

"I hope, sir," returned Mrs. Gamp, dropping an indignant curtsey, "as no bones is broke by me and Mrs. Harris a walkin' down upon a public wharf. Which was the very words she says to me (although they was the last I ever had to speak) was these: 'Sairey,' she says, 'is it a public wharf?' 'Mrs. Harris,' I makes answer, 'can you doubt it? You have knowed me now, ma'am, eight-and-thirty year; and did you ever know me go, or wish to go, where I was not made welcome? — say the words.' 'No, Sairey,' Mrs. Harris says, 'contrairy quite.' And well she knows it, too. I am but a poor woman, but I've been sought arter, sir, though you may not think it. I've been knocked up at all hours of the night, and warned out by a many landlords, in consequence of being mistook for Fire. I goes out working for my bread, 't is true, but I maintains my independency, with your kind leave, and which I will till death. I has my feelin's as a woman, sir, and

I have been a mother likeways; but touch a pipkin as belongs to me, or make the least remarks on what I eats or drinks, and though you was the favouritest young for'ard hussy of a servant-gal as ever come into a house, either you leaves the place or me. My earnings is not great, sir, but I will not be impoged upon. Bless the babe, and save the mother, is my mortar, sir; but I makes so free as add to that, Don't try no impogician with the Nuss, for she will not abear it!"

Mrs. Gamp concluded by drawing her shawl tightly over herself with both hands, and, as usual, referring to Mrs. Harris for full corroboration of these particulars. She had that peculiar trembling of the head, which, in ladies of her excitable nature, may be taken as a sure indication of their breaking out again very shortly; when Jonas made a timely interposition.

"As you *are* here," he said, "you had better see to her, and take her home. I am otherwise engaged." He said nothing more; but looked at Montague, as if to give him notice that he was ready to attend him.

"I am sorry to take you away," said Montague.

Jonas gave him a sinister look, which long lived in Tom's memory, and which he often recalled afterwards.

"I am, upon my life," said Montague. "Why did you make it necessary?"

With the same dark glance as before, Jonas replied, after a moment's silence: —

"The necessity is none of my making. You have brought it about yourself."

He said nothing more. He said even this as if he were bound, and in the other's power, but had a sullen and suppressed devil within him which he could not quite resist. His very gait, as they walked away together, was like that of a fettered man; but, striving to work out at his clenched hands, knitted brows, and fast-set lips, was the same imprisoned devil still.

They got into a handsome cabriolet, which was waiting for them, and drove away.

The whole of this extraordinary scene had passed so rapidly, and the tumult which prevailed around was so unconscious of any impression from it, that, although Tom had been one of the chief actors, it was like a dream. No one had noticed him

after they had left the packet. He had stood behind Jonas, and so near him that he could not help hearing all that passed. He had stood there, with his sister on his arm, expecting and hoping to have an opportunity of explaining his strange share in this yet stranger business. But Jonas had not raised his eyes from the ground; no one else had even looked towards him; and before he could resolve on any course of action, they were all gone.

He gazed round for his landlord. But he had done that more than once already, and no such man was to be seen. He was still pursuing this search with his eyes, when he saw a hand beckoning to him from a hackney-coach; and hurrying towards it, found it was Merry's. She addressed him hurriedly, but bent out of the window, that she might not be overheard by her companion, Mrs. Gamp.

"What is it!" she said, "Good Heaven, what is it? Why did he tell me last night to prepare for a long journey, and why have you brought us back like criminals? Dear Mr. Pinch!" she clasped her hands distractedly, "be merciful to us. Whatever this dreadful secret is, be merciful, and God will bless you!"

"If any power of mercy lay with me," cried Tom, "trust me, you shouldn't ask in vain. But I am far more ignorant and weak than you."

She withdrew into the coach again, and he saw the hand waving towards him for a moment; but whether in reproachfulness or incredulity, or misery, or grief, or sad adieu, or what else, he could not, being so hurried, understand. *She* was gone now; and Ruth and he were left to walk away, and wonder.

Had Mr. Nadgett appointed the man who never came, to meet him upon London Bridge that morning? He was certainly looking over the parapet, and down upon the steamboat-wharf at that moment. It could not have been for pleasure; he never took pleasure. No. He must have had some business there.

CHAPTER XLI

MR. JONAS AND HIS FRIEND, ARRIVING AT A PLEASANT UNDERSTANDING, SET FORTH UPON AN ENTERPRISE.

THE office of the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company being near at hand, and Mr. Montague driving Jonas straight there, they had very little way to go. But the journey might have been one of several hours' duration, without provoking a remark from either; for it was clear that Jonas did not mean to break the silence which prevailed between them, and that it was not, as yet, his dear friend's cue to tempt him into conversation.

He had thrown aside his cloak, as having now no motive for concealment, and with that garment huddled on his knees, sat as far removed from his companion as the limited space in such a carriage would allow. There was a striking difference in his manner, compared with what it had been within a few minutes, when Tom encountered him so unexpectedly on board the packet, or when the ugly change had fallen on him in Mr. Montague's dressing-room. He had the aspect of a man found out, and held at bay; of being baffled, hunted, and beset; but there was now a dawning and increasing purpose in his face, which changed it very much. It was gloomy, distrustful, lowering; pale with anger, and defeat; it still was humbled, abject, cowardly, and mean; but, let the conflict go on as it would, there was one strong purpose wrestling with every emotion of his mind, and casting the whole series down as they arose.

Not prepossessing in appearance at the best of times, it may be readily supposed that he was not so now. He had left deep marks of his front teeth in his nether lip; and those tokens of the agitation he had lately undergone improved his looks as little as the heavy corrugations in his forehead. But he was self-possessed now; unnaturally self-possessed, indeed, as men quite otherwise than brave are known to be in desperate extremities; and when the carriage stopped, he waited for no invitation, but leaped hardily out, and went up stairs.

The chairman followed him; and closing the board-room door as soon as they had entered, threw himself upon a sofa. Jonas stood before the window, looking down into the street; and leaned against the sash, resting his head upon his arms.

"This is not handsome, Chuzzlewit!" said Montague, at length. "Not handsome, upon my soul!"

"What would you have me do?" he answered, looking round abruptly; "what do you expect?"

"Confidence, my good fellow. Some confidence!" said Montague, in an injured tone.

"Good! You show great confidence in me," retorted Jonas. "Don't you?"

"Do I not?" said his companion, raising his head, and looking at him, but he had turned again. "Do I not? Have I not confided to you the easy schemes I have formed for our advantage; *our* advantage, mind, not mine alone; and what is my return? Attempted flight!"

"How do you know that? Who said I meant to fly?"

"Who said! Come, come. A foreign boat, my friend, an early hour, a figure wrapped up for disguise! Who said! If you didn't mean to jilt me, why were you there? If you didn't mean to jilt me, why did you come back?"

"I came back," said Jonas, "to avoid disturbance."

"You were wise," rejoined his friend.

Jonas stood quite silent; still looking down into the street, and resting his head upon his arms.

"Now, Chuzzlewit," said Montague, "notwithstanding what has passed, I will be plain with you. Are you attending to me there? I only see your back."

"*I* hear you. Go on!"

"I say that notwithstanding what has passed, I will be plain with you."

"You said that before. And I have told you once, I heard you say it. Go on."

"You are a little chafed, but I can make allowances for that, and am, fortunately, myself in the very best of tempers. Now, let us see how circumstances stand. A day or two ago I mentioned to you, my dear fellow, that I thought I had discovered —"

"Will you hold your tongue?" said Jonas, looking fiercely round, and glancing at the door.

"Well, well!" said Montague. "Judicious! Quite correct! My discoveries being published, would be like many other men's discoveries in this honest world; of no further use to me. You see, Chuzzlewit, how ingenuous and frank I am in showing you the weakness of my own position! To return. I make, or think I make, a certain discovery, which I take an early opportunity of mentioning in your ear, in that spirit of confidence which I really hoped did prevail between us, and was reciprocated by you. Perhaps there is something in it; perhaps there is nothing. I have my knowledge and opinion on the subject. You have yours. We will not discuss the question. But, my good fellow, you have been weak; what I wish to point out to you is, that you have been weak. I may desire to turn this little incident to my account (indeed, I do; I'll not deny it), but my account does not lie in probing it, or using it against you."

"What do you call using it against me?" asked Jonas, who had not yet changed his attitude.

"Oh!" said Montague, with a laugh. "We 'll not enter into that."

"Using it to make a beggar of me. Is that the use you mean?"

"No."

"Ecod," muttered Jonas bitterly. "That 's the use in which your account *does* lie. You speak the truth there."

"I wish you to venture (it 's a very safe venture) a little more with us, certainly, and to keep quiet," said Montague. "You promised me you would; and you must. I say it plainly, Chuzzlewit, you MUST. Reason the matter. If you don't, my secret is worthless to me; and being so, it may as well become the public property as mine; better, for I shall gain some credit, bringing it to light. I want you, besides, to act as a decoy in a case I have already told you of. You don't mind that, I know. You care nothing for the man (you care nothing for any man; you are too sharp; so am I, I hope), and could bear any loss of his with pious fortitude. Ha, ha, ha! You have tried to escape from the first consequence. You cannot escape it, I assure you. I have shown you that to-day. Now I am not a moral man, you know. I am not the least in the world affected by anything you may have done; by any little indiscretion you may have committed; but I wish to profit by it, if I

can, and to a man of your intelligence I make that free confession. I am not at all singular in that infirmity. Everybody profits by the indiscretion of his neighbour; and the people in the best repute the most. Why do you give me this trouble? It must come to a friendly agreement, or an unfriendly crash. It must. If the former, you are very little hurt. If the latter — well! you know best what is likely to happen then."

Jonas left the window, and walked up close to him. He did not look him in the face; it was not his habit to do that; but he kept his eyes towards him — on his breast, or thereabouts — and was at great pains to speak slowly and distinctly, in reply. Just as a man in a state of conscious drunkenness might be.

"Lying is of no use now," he said. "I *did* think of getting away this morning, and making better terms with you from a distance."

"To be sure! To be sure!" replied Montague. "Nothing more natural. I foresaw that, and provided against it. But I am afraid I am interrupting you."

"How the devil," pursued Jonas, with a still greater effort, "you made choice of your messenger, and where you found him, I'll not ask you. I owed him one good turn before to-day. If you are so careless of men in general, as you said you were just now, you are quite indifferent to what becomes of such a crop-tailed cur as that, and will leave me to settle my account with him in my own manner."

If he had raised his eyes to his companion's face, he would have seen that Montague was evidently unable to comprehend his meaning. But, continuing to stand before him, with his furtive gaze directed as before, and pausing here, only to moisten his dry lips with his tongue, the fact was lost upon him. It might have struck a close observer that this fixed and steady glance of Jonas's was a part of the alteration which had taken place in his demeanour. He kept it riveted on one spot, with which his thoughts had manifestly nothing to do; like as a juggler walking on a cord or wire to any dangerous end, holds some object in his sight to steady him, and never wanders from it, lest he trip.

Montague was quick in his rejoinder, though he made it at a venture. There was no difference of opinion between him and his friend on *that* point. Not the least.

"Your great discovery," Jonas proceeded, with a savage sneer that got the better of him for the moment, "may be true, and may be false. Whichever it is, I dare say I 'm no worse than other men."

"Not a bit," said Tigg. "Not a bit. We 're all alike — or nearly so."

"I want to know this," Jonas went on to say; "is it your own? You 'll not wonder at my asking the question."

"My own!" repeated Montague.

"Ay!" returned the other gruffly. "Is it known to anybody else? Come! Don't waver about that."

"No!" said Montague, without the smallest hesitation. "What would it be worth, do you think, unless I had the keeping of it?"

Now, for the first time, Jonas looked at him. After a pause, he put out his hand, and said, with a laugh: —

"Come! make things easy to me, and I 'm yours. I don't know that I may not be better off here, after all, than if I had gone away this morning. But here I am, and here I 'll stay now. Take your oath!"

He cleared his throat, for he was speaking hoarsely, and said in a lighter tone: —

"Shall I go to Pecksniff? When? Say when!"

"Immediately!" cried Montague. "He cannot be enticed too soon."

"Ecod!" cried Jonas, with a wild laugh, "there 's some fun in catching that old hypocrite. I hate him. Shall I go to-night?"

"Ay! This," said Montague ecstatically, "is like business! We understand each other now! To-night, my good fellow, by all means."

"Come with me," cried Jonas. "We must make a dash; go down in state, and carry documents, for he 's a deep file to deal with, and must be drawn on with an artful hand, or he 'll not follow. I know him. As I can't take your lodgings or your dinners down, I must take you. Will you come to-night?"

His friend appeared to hesitate; and neither to have anticipated this proposal nor to relish it very much.

"We can concert our plans upon the road," said Jonas. "We must not go direct to him, but cross over from some

ther place, and turn out of our way to see him. I may not want to introduce you, but I must have you on the spot. I know the man, I tell you."

"But what if the man knows me?" said Montague, shrugging his shoulders.

"He know!" cried Jonas. "Don't you run that risk with fifty men a day! Would your father know you? Did *I* know you? Ecod, you were another figure when I saw you first. Ha, ha, ha! I see the rents and patches now! No false hair then, no black dye! You were another sort of joker in those days, you were! You even spoke different, then. You've acted the gentleman so seriously since, that you've taken in yourself. If he should know you, what does it matter? Such a change is a proof of your success. You know that, or you would not have made yourself known to me. Will you come?"

"My good fellow," said Montague, still hesitating, "I can trust you alone."

"Trust me! Ecod, you may trust me now, far enough. I'll try to go away no more — no more!" He stopped, and added in a more sober tone, "I can't get on without you. Will you come?"

"I will," said Montague, "if that's your opinion." And they shook hands upon it.

The boisterous manner which Jonas had exhibited during the latter part of this conversation, and which had gone on visibly increasing with almost every word he had spoken, from the time when he looked his honourable friend in the face until now; did not now subside, but, remaining at its height, varied by him. Most unusual with him at any period; most inconsistent with his temper and constitution; especially unnatural it would appear in one so darkly circumstanced; it abided with him. It was not like the effect of wine, or any ardent drink, for he was perfectly coherent. It even made him proof against the usual influence of such means of excitement; for although he drank deeply several times that day, with no reserve or caution, he remained exactly the same man, and his pulses neither rose nor fell in the least observable degree.

Deciding, after some discussion, to travel at night, in order that the day's business might not be broken in upon, they took counsel together in reference to the means. Mr. Montague

being of opinion that four horses were advisable, at all events for the first stage, as throwing a great deal of dust into people's eyes in more senses than one, a travelling chariot and four lay under orders for nine o'clock. Jonas did not go home; observing that his being obliged to leave town on business in so great a hurry would be a good excuse for having turned back so unexpectedly in the morning. So he wrote a note for his portmanteau and sent it by a messenger, who duly brought his luggage back, with a short note from that other piece of luggage, his wife, expressive of her wish to be allowed to come and see him for a moment. To this request he sent for answer, "she had better;" and one such threatening affirmative being sufficient, in defiance of the English grammar, to express a negative, she kept away.

Mr. Montague being much engaged in the course of the day, Jonas bestowed his spirits chiefly on the doctor, with whom he lunched in the medical officer's own room. On his way thither, encountering Mr. Nadgett in the outer office, he bantered that stealthy gentleman on always appearing anxious to avoid him, and inquired if he were afraid of him. Mr. Nadgett slyly answered, "No, but he believed it must be his way, as he had been charged with much the same kind of thing before."

Mr. Montague was listening to, or, to speak with greater elegance, he overheard, this dialogue. As soon as Jonas was gone, he beckoned Nadgett to him with the feather of his pen, and whispered in his ear: —

"Who gave him my letter this morning?"

"My lodger, sir," said Nadgett, behind the palm of his hand.

"How came that about?"

"I found him on the wharf, sir. Being so much hurried, and you not arrived, it was necessary to do something. It fortunately occurred to me, that if I gave it him myself, I could be of no further use. I should have been blown upon immediately."

"Mr. Nadgett, you are a jewel," said Montague, patting him on the back. "What's your lodger's name?"

"Pinch, sir. Mr. Thomas Pinch."

Montague reflected for a little while, and then asked: —

"From the country, do you know?"

"From Wiltshire, sir, he told me."

They parted without another word. To see Mr. Nadgett's face when Montague and he next met, and to see Mr. Montague acknowledge it, anybody might have undertaken to swear that they had never spoken to each other confidentially in all their lives.

In the meanwhile, Mr. Jonas and the doctor made themselves very comfortable up stairs, over a bottle of the old Madeira and some sandwiches; for the doctor having been formally invited to dine below, at six o'clock, preferred a light repast for lunch. It was advisable, he said, in two points of view: First, as being healthy in itself. Secondly, as being a better preparation for dinner.

"And you are bound for all our sakes to take particular care of your digestion, Mr. Chuzzlewit, my dear sir," said the doctor, smacking his lips after a glass of wine; "for depend upon it, it is worth preserving. It must be in admirable condition, sir; perfect chronometer-work. Otherwise your spirits would not be so remarkable. Your bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne, Mr. Chuzzlewit, as what's-his-name says in the play. I wish he said it in a play which did anything like common justice to our profession, by the bye. There is an apothecary in that drama, sir, which is a low thing; vulgar, quite out of nature altogether."

Mr. Jobling pulled out his shirt-frill of fine linen, as though he would have added, "This is what I call nature in a medical man, sir;" and looked at Jonas for an observation.

Jonas not being in a condition to pursue the subject, took up a case of lancets that was lying on the table, and opened it.

"Ah!" said the doctor, leaning back in his chair, "I always take 'em out of my pocket before I eat. My pockets are rather tight. Ha, ha, ha!"

Jonas had opened one of the shining little instruments; and was scrutinising it with a look as sharp and eager as its own right edge.

"Good steel, doctor. Good steel! Eh?"

"Ye-es," replied the doctor, with the faltering modesty of ownership. "One might open a vein pretty dexterously with it, Mr. Chuzzlewit."

"It has opened a good many in its time, I suppose?" said Jonas, looking at it with a growing interest.

"Not a few, my dear sir, not a few. It has been engaged in a — in a pretty good practice, I believe I may say," replied the doctor, coughing as if the matter-of-fact were so very dry and literal that he could n't help it. "In a pretty good practice," repeated the doctor, putting another glass of wine to his lips.

"Now, could you cut a man's throat with such a thing as this?" demanded Jonas.

"Oh, certainly, certainly, if you took him in the right place," returned the doctor. "It all depends upon that."

"Where you have your hand now, hey?" cried Jonas, bending forward to look at it.

"Yes," said the doctor; "that 's the jugular."

Jonas, in his vivacity, made a sudden sawing in the air, so close behind the doctor's jugular, that he turned quite red. Then Jonas (in the same strange spirit of vivacity) burst into a loud discordant laugh.

"No, no," said the doctor, shaking his head; "edge tools, edge tools; never play with 'em. A very remarkable instance of the skilful use of edge tools, by the way, occurs to me at this moment. It was a case of murder. I am afraid it was a case of murder, committed by a member of our profession; it was so artistically done."

"Ay!" said Jonas. "How was that?"

"Why, sir," returned Jobling, "the thing lies in a nutshell. A certain gentleman was found, one morning, in an obscure street, lying in an angle of a doorway — I should rather say, leaning, in an upright position, in the angle of a doorway, and supported consequently *by* the doorway. Upon his waistcoat there was one solitary drop of blood. He was dead, and cold; and had been murdered, sir."

"Only one drop of blood!" said Jonas.

"Sir, that man," replied the doctor, "had been stabbed to the heart. Had been stabbed to the heart with such dexterity, sir, that he had died instantly, and had bled internally. It was supposed that a medical friend of his (to whom suspicion attached) had engaged him in conversation on some pretence; had taken him, very likely by the button, in a conversational manner; had examined his ground, at leisure, with his other hand; had marked the exact spot; drawn out the instrument, whatever it was, when he was quite prepared; and — "

"And done the trick," suggested Jonas.

"Exactly so," replied the doctor. "It was quite an operation in its way, and very neat. The medical friend never turned up; and, as I tell you, he had the credit of it. Whether he did it or not, I can't say. But, having had the honour to be called in with two or three of my professional brethren on the occasion, and having assisted to make a careful examination of the wound, I have no hesitation in saying that it would have reflected credit on any medical man; and that in an unprofessional person, it could not but be considered, either as an extraordinary work of art, or the result of a still more extraordinary, happy, and favourable conjunction of circumstances."

His hearer was so much interested in this case, that the doctor went on to elucidate it with the assistance of his own finger and thumb and waistcoat; and at Jonas's request, he took the further trouble of going into a corner of the room, and alternately representing the murdered man and the murderer; which he did with great effect. The bottle being emptied, and the story done, Jonas was in precisely the same boisterous and unusual state as when they had sat down. If, as Jobling theorised, his good digestion were the cause, he must have been a very ostrich.

At dinner, it was just the same; and after dinner too; though wine was drunk in abundance, and various rich meats eaten. At nine o'clock it was still the same. There being a lamp in the carriage, he swore they would take a pack of cards, and a bottle of wine: and with these things under his cloak, went down to the door.

"Out of the way, Tom Thumb, and get to bed!"

This was the salutation he bestowed on Mr. Bailey, who, booted and wrapped up, stood at the carriage-door to help him in.

"To bed, sir! I'm a going, too," said Bailey.

He alighted quickly, and walked back into the hall, where Montague was lighting a cigar: conducting Mr. Bailey with him, by the collar.

"You are not a going to take this monkey of a boy, are you!"

"Yes," said Montague.

He gave the boy a shake, and threw him roughly aside.

There was more of his familiar self in the action than in anything he had done that day; but he broke out laughing immediately afterwards, and making a thrust at the doctor with his hand, in imitation of his representation of the medical friend, went out to the carriage again, and took his seat. His companion followed immediately. Mr. Bailey climbed into the rumble.

"It will be a stormy night!" exclaimed the doctor, as they started.

CHAPTER XLII

CONTINUATION OF THE ENTERPRISE OF MR. JONAS AND HIS FRIEND.

THE doctor's prognostication in reference to the weather was speedily verified. Although the weather was not a patient of his, and no third party had required him to give an opinion on the case, the quick fulfilment of his prophecy may be taken as an instance of his professional tact; for, unless the threatening aspect of the night had been perfectly plain and unmistakable, Mr. Jobling would never have compromised his reputation by delivering any sentiments on the subject. He used this principle in Medicine with too much success to be unmindful of it in his commonest transactions.

It was one of those hot, silent nights, when people sit at windows, listening for the thunder which they know will shortly break; when they recall dismal tales of hurricanes and earthquakes; and of lonely travellers on open plains, and lonely ships at sea struck by lightning. Lightning flashed and quivered on the black horizon even now; and hollow murmurings were in the wind, as though it had been blowing where the thunder rolled, and still was charged with its exhausted echoes. But the storm, though gathering swiftly, had not yet come up; and the prevailing stillness was the more solemn, from the dull intelligence that seemed to hover in the air, of noise and conflict afar off.

It was very dark; but in the murky sky there were masses of cloud which shone with a lurid light, like monstrous heaps of copper that had been heated in a furnace, and were growing cold. These had been advancing steadily and slowly, but they were now motionless, or nearly so. As the carriage clattered round the corners of the streets, it passed, at every one, a knot of persons, who had come there — many from their houses close at hand, without hats — to look up at that quarter of the sky. And now, a very few large drops of rain began to fall, and thunder rumbled in the distance.

Jonas sat in a corner of the carriage, with his bottle resting on his knee, and gripped as tightly in his hand as if he would have ground its neck to powder if he could. Instinctively attracted by the night, he had laid aside the pack of cards upon the cushion; and with the same involuntary impulse, so intelligible to both of them as not to occasion a remark on either side, his companion had extinguished the lamp. The front glasses were down; and they sat looking silently out upon the gloomy scene before them.

They were clear of London, or as clear of it as travellers can be, whose way lies on the Western Road, within a stage of that enormous city. Occasionally, they encountered a foot-passenger, hurrying to the nearest place of shelter; or some unwieldy cart proceeding onward at a heavy trot, with the same end in view. Little clusters of such vehicles were gathered round the stable-yard or baiting-place of every wayside tavern; while their drivers watched the weather from the doors and open windows, or made merry within. Everywhere, the people were disposed to bear each other company, rather than sit alone; so that groups of watchful faces seemed to be looking out upon the night *and them*, from almost every house they passed.

It may appear strange that this should have disturbed Jonas, or rendered him uneasy, but it did. After muttering to himself, and often changing his position, he drew up the blind on his side of the carriage, and turned his shoulder sulkily towards it. But he neither looked at his companion nor broke the silence which prevailed between them, and which had fallen so suddenly upon himself, by addressing a word to him.

The thunder rolled, the lightning flashed; the rain poured down, like Heaven's wrath. Surrounded at one moment by intolerable light, and at the next by pitchy darkness, they still pressed forward on their journey. Even when they arrived at the end of the stage, and might have tarried, they did not; but ordered horses out, immediately. Nor had this any reference to some five minutes' lull, which at that time seemed to promise a cessation of the storm. They held their course as if they were impelled and driven by its fury. Although they had not exchanged a dozen words, and might have tarried very well, they seemed to feel, by joint consent, that onward they must go.

Louder and louder the deep thunder rolled, as through the myriad halls of some vast temple in the sky; fiercer and brighter became the lightning; more and more heavily the rain poured down. The horses (they were travelling now with a single pair) plunged and started from the rills of quivering fire that seemed to wind along the ground before them: but there these two men sat, and forward they went as if they were led on by an invisible attraction.

The eye, partaking of the quickness of the flashing light, saw in its every gleam a multitude of objects which it could not see at steady noon in fifty times that period. Bells in steeples, with the rope and wheel that moved them; ragged nests of birds in cornices and nooks; faces full of consternation in the tilted wagons that came tearing past, their frightened teams ringing out a warning which the thunder drowned; harrows and ploughs left out in fields; miles upon miles of hedge-divided country, with the distant fringe of trees as various as the scarecrow in the bean-field close at hand; in a trembling, vivid, flickering instant, everything was clear and plain: then came a flush of red into the yellow light; a change to blue; a brightness so intense that there was nothing else but light; and then the deepest and profoundest darkness.

The lightning being very crooked and very dazzling, may have presented or assisted a curious optical illusion, which suddenly rose before the startled eyes of Montague in the carriage, and as rapidly disappeared. He thought he saw Jonas with his hand lifted, and the bottle clenched in it like a hammer, making as if he would aim a blow at his head. At the same time he observed (or so believed), an expression in his face, a combination of the unnatural excitement he had shown all day, with a wild hatred and fear, which might have rendered a wolf a less terrible companion.

He uttered an involuntary exclamation, and called to the driver, who brought his horses to a stop with all speed.

It could hardly have been as he supposed, for although he had not taken his eyes off his companion, and had not seen him move, he sat reclining in his corner as before.

"What's the matter?" said Jonas. "Is that your general way of waking out of your sleep?"

"I could swear," returned the other, "that I have not closed my eyes!"

"When you have sworn it," said Jonas composedly, "we had better go on again, if you have only stopped for that."

He uncorked the bottle with the help of his teeth, and putting it to his lips, took a long draught.

"I wish we had never started on this journey. This is not," said Montague, recoiling instinctively, and speaking in a voice that betrayed his agitation, "this is not a night to travel in."

"Ecod! you're right there," returned Jonas: "and we should n't be out in it but for you. If you had n't kept me waiting all day, we might have been at Salisbury by this time; snug abed and fast asleep. What are we stopping for?"

His companion put his head out of window for a moment, and drawing it in again, observed (as if that were his cause of anxiety), that the boy was drenched to the skin.

"Serve him right," said Jonas. "I 'm glad of it. What the devil are we stopping for? Are you going to spread him out to dry?"

"I have half a mind to take him inside," observed the other with some hesitation.

"Oh! thankee!" said Jonas. "We don't want any damp boys here — especially a young imp like him. Let him be where he is. He ain't afraid of a little thunder and lightning, I dare say, whoever else is. Go on, driver! We had better have *him* inside perhaps," he muttered with a laugh, "and the horses!"

"Don't go too fast," cried Montague to the postilion, "and take care how you go. You were nearly in the ditch when I called to you."

This was not true; and Jonas bluntly said so, as they moved forward again. Montague took little or no heed of what he said, but repeated that it was not a night for travelling, and showed himself, both then and afterwards, unusually anxious.

From this time Jonas recovered his former spirits, if such a term may be employed to express the state in which he had left the city. He had his bottle often at his mouth; roared out snatches of songs, without the least regard to time or tune or voice, or anything but loud discordance; and urged his silent friend to be merry with him.

"You 're the best company in the world, my good fellow," said Montague with an effort, "and in general irresistible; but to-night — do you hear it?"

"Ecod! I hear and see it too," cried Jonas, shading his eyes, for the moment, from the lightning which was flashing, not in any one direction, but all around them. "What of that? It don't change you, nor me, nor our affairs. Chorus, chorus!

> It may lighten and storm,
> Till it hunt the red worm
> From the grass where the gibbet is driven;
> But it can't hurt the dead,
> And it won't save the head
> That is doom'd to be rifled and riven.

That must be a precious old song," he added with an oath, as he stopped short in a kind of wonder at himself. "I haven't heard it since I was a boy, and how it comes into my head now, unless the lightning put it there, I don't know. 'Can't hurt the dead'! No, no. 'And won't save the head'! No, no. No! Ha, ha, ha!"

His mirth was of such a savage and extraordinary character, and was, in an inexplicable way, at once so suited to the night, and yet such a coarse intrusion on its terrors, that his fellow-traveller, always a coward, shrunk from him in positive fear. Instead of Jonas being his tool and instrument, their places seemed to be reversed. But there was reason for this too, Montague thought; since the sense of his debasement might naturally inspire such a man with the wish to assert a noisy independence, and in that licence to forget his real condition. Being quick enough, in reference to such subjects of contemplation, he was not long in taking this argument into account, and giving it its full weight. But still he felt a vague sense of alarm, and was depressed and uneasy.

He was certain he had not been asleep, but his eyes might have deceived him; for, looking at Jonas now, in any interval of darkness, he could represent his figure to himself in any attitude his state of mind suggested. On the other hand, he knew full well that Jonas had no reason to love him; and even taking the piece of pantomime which had so impressed his mind to be a real gesture, and not the working of his fancy, the most that could be said of it was that it was quite in keeping with the rest of his diabolical fun, and had the same impotent expression of truth in it. "If he could kill me with a wish," thought the swindler, "I should not live long."

He resolved, that when he should have had his use of

Jonas, he would restrain him with an iron curb; in the mean time that he could not do better than leave him to take his own way, and preserve his own peculiar description of good-humour, after his own uncommon manner. It was no great sacrifice to bear with him; "for when all is got that can be got," thought Montague, "I shall decamp across the water, and have the laugh on my side — and the gains."

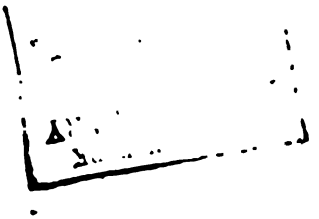
Such were his reflections from hour to hour; his state of mind being one in which the same thoughts constantly present themselves over and over again in wearisome repetition; while Jonas, who appeared to have dismissed reflection altogether, entertained himself as before. They agreed that they would go to Salisbury, and would cross to Mr. Pecksniff's in the morning; and at the prospect of deluding that worthy gentleman, the spirits of his amiable son-in-law became more boisterous than ever.

As the night wore on, the thunder died away, but still rolled gloomily and mournfully in the distance. The lightning too, though now comparatively harmless, was yet bright and frequent. The rain was quite as violent as it had ever been.

It was their ill-fortune, at about the time of dawn and in the last stage of their journey, to have a restive pair of horses. These animals had been greatly terrified in their stable by the tempest; and coming out into the dreary interval between night and morning, when the glare of the lightning was yet unsubdued by day, and the various objects in their view were presented in indistinct and exaggerated shapes which they would not have worn by night, they gradually became less and less capable of control: until, taking a sudden fright at something by the roadside, they dashed off wildly down a steep hill, flung the driver from his saddle, drew the carriage to the brink of a ditch, stumbled headlong down, and threw it crashing over.

The travellers had opened the carriage door, and had either jumped or fallen out. Jonas was the first to stagger to his feet. He felt sick, and weak, and very giddy, and, reeling to a five-barred gate, stood holding by it — looking drowsily about, as the whole landscape swam before his eyes. But by degrees he grew more conscious, and presently observed that Montague was lying senseless in the road, within a few feet of the horses.

In an instant, as if his own faint body were suddenly



animated by a demon, he ran to the horses' heads; and pulling at their bridles with all his force, set them struggling and plunging with such mad violence as brought their hoofs at every effort nearer to the skull of the prostrate man, and must have led in half a minute to his brains being dashed out on the highway.

As he did this, he fought and contended with them like a man possessed; making them wilder by his cries.

"Whoop!" cried Jonas. "Whoop! again! another! A little more, a little more! Up, ye devils! Hillo!"

As he heard the driver, who had risen and was hurrying up, crying to him to desist, his violence increased.

"Hillo! Hillo!" cried Jonas.

"For God's sake!" cried the driver. "The gentleman — in the road — he 'll be killed!"

The same shouts and the same struggles were his only answer. But the man, darting in at the peril of his own life, saved Montague's, by dragging him through the mire and water out of the reach of present harm. That done, he ran to Jonas; and with the aid of his knife they very shortly disengaged the horses from the broken chariot, and got them, cut and bleeding, on their legs again. The postilion and Jonas had now leisure to look at each other, which they had not had yet.

"Presence of mind, presence of mind!" cried Jonas, throwing up his hands wildly. "What would you have done without me!"

"The other gentleman would have done badly without *me*," returned the man, shaking his head. "You should have saved him first. I gave him up for dead."

"Presence of mind, you croaker, presence of mind!" cried Jonas, with a harsh loud laugh. "Was he struck, do you think?"

They both turned to look at him. Jonas muttered something to himself, when he saw him sitting up beneath the hedge, looking vacantly round.

"What 's the matter?" asked Montague. "Is anybody hurt?"

"Ecod!" said Jonas, "it don't seem so. There are no bones broke, after all."

They raised him, and he tried to walk. He was a good deal shaken, and trembled very much. But with the excep-

tion of a few cuts and bruises this was all the damage he had sustained.

"Cuts and bruises, eh?" said Jonas. "We've all got them. Only cuts and bruises, eh?"

"I would n't have given sixpence for the gentleman's head in half a dozen seconds more, for all he 's only cut and bruised," observed the post-boy. "If ever you 're in an accident of this sort again, sir, which I hope you won't be, never you pull at the bridle of a horse that 's down when there 's a man's head in the way. That can't be done twice without there being a dead man in the case; it would have ended in that, this time, as sure as ever you were born, if I had n't come up just when I did."

Jonas replied by advising him with a curse to hold his tongue, and to go somewhere whither he was not very likely to go of his own accord. But Montague, who had listened eagerly to every word, himself diverted the subject, by exclaiming: "Where 's the boy?"

"Ecod, I forgot that monkey," said Jonas. "What 's become of him?" A very brief search settled that question. The unfortunate Mr. Bailey had been thrown sheer over the hedge or the five-barred gate; and was lying in the neighbouring field, to all appearance dead.

"When I said to-night that I wished I had never started on this journey," cried his master, "I knew it was an ill-fated one. Look at this boy!"

"Is that all?" growled Jonas. "If you call *that* a sign of it —"

"Why, what should I call a sign of it?" asked Montague hurriedly. "What do you mean?"

"I mean," said Jonas, stooping down over the body, "that I never heard you were his father, or had any particular reason to care much about him. Halloa! Hold up here!"

But the boy was past holding up, or being held up, or giving any other sign of life than a faint and fitful beating of the heart. After some discussion, the driver mounted the horse which had been least injured, and took the lad in his arms as well as he could; while Montague and Jonas leading the other horse, and carrying a trunk between them, walked by his side towards Salisbury.

"You 'd get there in a few minutes, and be able to send

assistance to meet us, if you went forward, post-boy," said Jonas. "Trot on!"

"No, no," cried Montague; "we 'll keep together."

"Why, what a chicken you are! You are not afraid of being robbed, are you?" said Jonas.

"I am not afraid of anything," replied the other, whose looks and manner were in flat contradiction to his words. "But we 'll keep together."

"You were mighty anxious about the boy, a minute ago," said Jonas. "I suppose you know that he may die in the mean time?"

"Ay, ay. I know. But we 'll keep together."

As it was clear that he was not to be moved from this determination, Jonas made no other rejoinder than such as his face expressed; and they proceeded in company. They had three or four good miles to travel; and the way was not made easier by the state of the road, the burden by which they were embarrassed, or their own stiff and sore condition. After a sufficiently long and painful walk, they arrived at the Inn; and having knocked the people up (it being yet very early in the morning), sent out messengers to see to the carriage and its contents, and roused a surgeon from his bed to tend the chief sufferer. All the service he could render he rendered promptly and skilfully. But he gave it as his opinion that the boy was labouring under a severe concussion of the brain, and that Mr. Bailey's mortal course was run.

If Montague's strong interest in the announcement could have been considered as unselfish, in any degree, it might have been a redeeming trait in a character that had no such lineaments to spare. But it was not difficult to see that, for some unexpressed reason best appreciated by himself, he attached a strange value to the company and presence of this mere child. When, after receiving some assistance from the surgeon himself, he retired to the bedroom prepared for him, and it was broad day, his mind was still dwelling on this theme.

"I would rather have lost," he said, "a thousand pounds than lost the boy just now. But I 'll return home alone. I am resolved upon that. Chuzzlewit shall go forward first, and I will follow in my own time. I 'll have no more of this," he added, wiping his damp forehead. "Twenty-four hours of this would turn my hair gray!"

After examining his chamber, and looking under the bed, and in the cupboards, and even behind the curtains, with unusual caution (although it was, as has been said, broad day) he double-locked the door by which he had entered, and retired to rest. There was another door in the room, but it was locked on the outer side; and with what place it communicated he knew not.

His fears or evil conscience reproduced this door in all his dreams. He dreamed that a dreadful secret was connected with it; a secret which he knew, and yet did not know, for although he was heavily responsible for it, and a party to it, he was harassed even in his vision by a distracting uncertainty in reference to its import. Incoherently entwined with this dream was another, which represented it as the hiding-place of an enemy, a shadow, a phantom; and made it the business of his life to keep the terrible creature closed up and prevent it from forcing its way in upon him. With this view Nadgett and he, and a strange man with a bloody smear upon his head (who told him that he had been his playfellow, and told him, too, the real name of an old schoolmate, forgotten until then), worked with iron plates and nails to make the door secure; but though they worked never so hard, it was all in vain, for the nails broke or changed to soft twigs, or what was worse, to worms, between their fingers; the wood of the door splintered and crumbled, so that even nails would not remain in it, and the iron plates curled up like hot paper. All this time the creature on the other side — whether it was in the shape of man, or beast, he neither knew nor sought to know — was gaining on them. But his greatest terror was when the man with the bloody smear upon his head demanded of him if he knew this creature's name, and said that he would whisper it. At this the dreamer fell upon his knees, his whole blood thrilling with inexplicable fear, and held his ears. But looking at the speaker's lips, he saw that they formed the utterance of the letter "J," and crying out aloud that the secret was discovered and they were all lost, he awoke.

Awoke to find Jonas standing at his bedside watching him. And that very door wide open.

As their eyes met, Jonas retreated a few paces, and Montague sprang out of bed.

"Heyday!" said Jonas. "You 're all alive this morning."

"Alive!" the other stammered, as he pulled the bell-rope violently; "what are you doing here?"

"It 's your room, to be sure," said Jonas; "but I 'm almost inclined to ask you what *you* are doing here? My room is on the other side of that door. No one told me last night not to open it. I thought it led into a passage, and was coming out to order breakfast. There 's — there 's no bell in my room."

Montague had in the mean time admitted the man with his hot water and boots, who hearing this said, yes, there was; and passed into the adjoining room to point it out at the head of the bed.

"I could n't find it, then," said Jonas; "it 's all the same. Shall I order breakfast?"

Montague answered in the affirmative. When Jonas had retired, whistling, through his own room he opened the door of communication, to take out the key and fasten it on the inner side. But it was taken out already.

He dragged a table against the door and sat down to collect himself, as if his dream still had some influence upon his mind.

"An evil journey," he repeated several times. "An evil journey. But I 'll travel home alone. I 'll have no more of this!"

His presentiment, or superstition, that it was an evil journey did not at all deter him from doing the evil for which the journey was undertaken. With this in view, he dressed himself more carefully than usual, to make a favourable impression on Mr. Pecksniff; and, reassured by his own appearance, the beauty of the morning, and the flashing of the wet boughs outside his window in the merry sunshine, was soon sufficiently inspirited to swear a few round oaths, and hum the fag-end of a song.

But he still muttered to himself at intervals, for all that; "I 'll travel home alone!"

CHAPTER XLIII

HAS AN INFLUENCE ON THE FORTUNES OF SEVERAL PEOPLE: MR. PECKSNIFF IS EXHIBITED IN THE PLENITUDE OF POWER, AND WIELDS THE SAME WITH FORTITUDE AND MAGNANIMITY.

On the night of the storm, Mrs. Lupin, hostess of the Blue Dragon, sat by herself in her little bar. Her solitary condition, or the bad weather, or both united, made Mrs. Lupin thoughtful, not to say sorrowful. As she sat with her chin upon her hand, looking out through a low back lattice, rendered dim in the brightest day-time by clustering vine-leaves, she shook her head very often, and said, "Dear me! Ah, dear, dear me!"

It was a melancholy time, even in the snugness of the Dragon bar. The rich expanse of corn-field, pasture-land, green slope, and gentle undulation, with its sparkling brooks, its many hedgerows, and its clumps of beautiful trees, was black and dreary, from the diamond panes of the lattice away to the far horizon, where the thunder seemed to roll along the hills. The heavy rain beat down the tender branches of vine and jessamine, and trampled on them in its fury; and when the lightning gleamed, it showed the tearful leaves shivering and cowering together at the window, and tapping at it urgently, as if beseeching to be sheltered from the dismal night.

As a mark of her respect for the lightning, Mrs. Lupin had removed her candle to the chimney-piece. Her basket of needlework stood unheeded at her elbow; her supper, spread on a round table not far off, was untasted; and the knives had been removed for fear of attraction. She had sat for a long time with her chin upon her hand, saying to herself at intervals, "Dear me! Ah, dear, dear me!"

She was on the eve of saying so once more, when the latch of the house-door (closed to keep the rain out) rattled on its well-worn catch, and a traveller came in, who, shutting it

after him, and walking straight up to the half-door of the bar, said rather gruffly: —

"A pint of the best old beer here."

He had some reason to be gruff, for if he had passed the day in a waterfall he could scarcely have been wetter than he was. He was wrapped up to the eyes in a rough blue sailor's coat, and had an oil-skin hat on, from the capacious brim of which the rain fell trickling down upon his breast, and back, and shoulders. Judging from a certain liveliness of chin — he had so pulled down his hat and pulled up his collar to defend himself from the weather, that she could only see his chin, and even across that he drew the wet sleeve of his shaggy coat, as she looked at him — Mrs. Lupin set him down for a good-natured fellow, too.

"A bad night!" observed the hostess cheerfully.

The traveller shook himself like a Newfoundland dog, and said it was, rather.

"There 's a fire in the kitchen," said Mrs. Lupin, "and very good company there. Had n't you better go and dry yourself?"

"No, thankee," said the man, glancing towards the kitchen as he spoke: he seemed to know the way.

"It 's enough to give you your death of cold," observed the hostess.

"I don't take my death easy," returned the traveller; "or I should most likely have took it afore to-night. Your health, ma'am!"

Mrs. Lupin thanked him; but in the act of lifting the tankard to his mouth, he changed his mind, and put it down again. Throwing his body back, and looking about him stiffly, as a man does who is wrapped up, and has his hat low down over his eyes, he said: —

"What do you call this house? Not the Dragon, do you?"

Mrs. Lupin complacently made answer, "Yes, the Dragon."

"Why, then, you 've got a sort of relation of mine here, ma'am," said the traveller: "a young man of the name of Tapley. What! Mark, my boy!" apostrophising the premises, "have I come upon you at last, old buck!"

This was touching Mrs. Lupin on a tender point. She turned to trim the candle on the chimney-piece, and said, with her back towards the traveller: —

"Nobody should be made more welcome at the Dragon,

master, than any one who brought me news of Mark. But it 's many and many a long day and month since he left here and England. And whether he 's alive or dead, poor fellow, Heaven above us only knows!"

She shook her head, and her voice trembled; her hand must have done so too, for the light required a deal of trimming.

"Where did he go, ma'am?" asked the traveller, in a gentler voice.

"He went," said Mrs. Lupin, with increased distress, "to America. He was always tender-hearted and kind, and perhaps at this moment may be lying in prison under sentence of death, for taking pity on some miserable black, and helping the poor runaway creetur to escape. How could he ever go to America! Why did n't he go to some of those countries where the savages eat each other fairly, and give an equal chance to every one!"

Quite subdued by this time, Mrs. Lupin sobbed, and was retiring to a chair to give her grief free vent, when the traveller caught her in his arms, and she uttered a glad cry of recognition.

"Yes, I will!" cried Mark, "another — one more — twenty more! You did n't know me in that hat and coat? I thought you would have known me anywheres! Ten more!"

"So I should have known you, if I could have seen you; but I could n't, and you spoke so gruff. I did n't think you could speak gruff to me, Mark, at first coming back."

"Fifteen more!" said Mr. Tapley. "How handsome and how young you look! Six more! The last half dozen warn't a fair one, and must be done over again. Lord bless you, what a treat it is to see you! One more! Well, I never was so jolly. Just a few more, on account of there not being any credit in it!"

When Mr. Tapley stopped in these calculations in simple addition, he did it, not because he was at all tired of the exercise, but because he was out of breath. The pause reminded him of other duties.

"Mr. Martin Chuzzlewit 's outside," he said. "I left him under the cart-shed, while I came on to see if there was anybody here. We want to keep quiet to-night, till we know the news from you, and what it 's best for us to do."

"There 's not a soul in the house except the kitchen com-

many," returned the hostess. "If they were to know you had come back, Mark, they 'd have a bonfire in the street, late as it is."

"But they must n't know it to-night, my precious soul," said Mark; "so have the house shut, and the kitchen fire made up; and when it 's all ready, put a light in the winder and we 'll come in. One more! I long to hear about old friends. You 'll tell me all about 'em, won't you — Mr. Pinch, and the butcher's dog down the street, and the terrier over the way, and the wheelwright's, and every one of 'em. When I first caught sight of the church to-night, I thought the steeple would have choked me, I did. One more! Won't you? Not a very little one to finish off with?"

"You have had plenty, I am sure," said the hostess. "Go along with your foreign manners!"

"That ain't foreign, bless you!" cried Mark. "Native as oysters, that is! One more, because it 's native! As a mark of respect for the land we live in! This don't count as between you and me, you understand," said Mr. Tapley. "I ain't a kissin' you now, you 'll observe. I have been among the patriots; I 'm a kissin' my country."

It would have been very unreasonable to complain of the exhibition of his patriotism with which he followed up this explanation, that it was all lukewarm or indifferent. When he had given full expression to his nationality, he hurried off to Martin; while Mrs. Lupin, in a state of great agitation and excitement, prepared for their reception.

The company soon came tumbling out, insisting to each other that the Dragon clock was half an hour too fast, and that the thunder must have affected it. Impatient, wet and weary though they were, Martin and Mark were overjoyed to see those old faces, and watched them with delighted interest as they departed from the house, and passed close by them.

"There 's the old tailor, Mark!" whispered Martin.

"There he goes, sir! A little bandier than he was, I think, sir, ain't he? His figure 's so far altered, as it seems to me, that you might wheel a rather larger barrow between his legs as he walks, than you could have done conveniently when we knowed him. There 's Sam a coming out, sir."

"Ah, to be sure!" cried Martin; "Sam, the hostler. I wonder whether the horse of Pecksniff's is alive still?"

"Not a doubt on it, sir," returned Mark. "T[illegible] description of animal, sir, as will go on in a lony way [illegible] to himself for a long time, and get into the newspapers [illegible] under the title of 'Sing'lar Tenacity of Life in a Q[illegible]' As if he had ever been alive in all his life, worth [illegible]. There 's the clerk, sir, — wery drunk, as usual."

"I see him!" said Martin laughing. "But my [illegible] wet you are, Mark!"

"*I* am! What do you consider yourself, sir!"

"Oh, not half as bad," said his fellow-traveller, with [illegible] of great vexation. "I told you not to keep on the wa[illegible] Mark, but to let us change and change about. The r[illegible] been beating on you ever since it began."

"You don't know how it pleases me, sir," said Mark, [illegible] a short silence, "if I may make so bold as say so, to hear a going on in that there uncommon considerate way of [illegible] which I don't mean to attend to, never, but which, ever [illegible] that time when I was floored in Eden, you have showed [illegible]"

"Ah, Mark!" sighed Martin, "the less we say of that [illegible] better. Do I see the light yonder!"

"That 's the light!" cried Mark. "Lord bless her, [illegible] briskness she possesses! Now for it, sir. Neat [illegible] beds, and first-rate entertainment for man or beast."

The kitchen fire burnt clear and red, the table was [illegible] out, the kettle boiled; the slippers were there, the [illegible] toes, sheets of ham were there, cooking on the gridiron [illegible] dozen eggs were there, poaching in the frying-pan, a [illegible] cherry-brandy bottle was there, winking at a fowl [illegible] laser upon the table; rare provisions were there, dan[illegible] the rafters as if you had only to open your mouth, and [illegible] thing exquisitely ripe and good would be but too glad [illegible] excuse for tumbling into it. Mrs. Lupin, who for [illegible] had dislodged the very cook, high priestess of the temple, w[illegible] her own genial hands was dressing their repast.

It was impossible to help it — a ghost must have k[illegible] her. The Atlantic Ocean and the Red Sea being, in [illegible] respect, all one, Martin hugged her instantly. Mr. Pa[illegible] if the idea were quite novel, and had never occurred to [illegible] before, followed, with much gravity, on the same side.

"Little did I ever think," said Mrs. Lupin, adjusting [illegible] cap and laughing heartily — yes, and blushing, too, "when I

I've said that Mr. Pecksniff's young gentlemen were the life and soul of the Dragon, and that without them it would be too dull to live in — little did I ever think, I am sure, that any one of them would ever make so free as you, Mr. Martin! And still less that I should n't be angry with him, but should be glad with all my heart to be the first to welcome him home from America, with Mark Tapley for his — "

"For his friend, Mrs. Lupin," interposed Martin.

"For his friend," said the hostess, evidently gratified by this distinction, but at the same time admonishing Mr. Tapley with a fork to remain at a respectful distance. "Little did I ever think that! But still less, that I should ever have the changes to relate that I shall have to tell you of when you have done your supper!"

"Good Heaven!" cried Martin, changing colour, "what changes?"

"*She*," said the hostess, "is quite well, and now at Mr. Pecksniff's. Don't be at all alarmed about her. She is everything you could wish. It 's of no use mincing matters or making secrets, is it?" added Mrs. Lupin. "I know all about it, you see!"

"My good creature," returned Martin, "you are exactly the person who ought to know all about it. I am delighted to think you *do* know all about it. But what changes do you hint at? Has any death occurred?"

"No, no!" said the hostess. "Not so bad as that. But I declare now that I will not be drawn into saying another word till you have had your supper. If you ask me fifty questions in the mean time, I won't answer one."

She was so positive, that there was nothing for it but to get the supper over as quickly as possible; and as they had been walking a great many miles, and had fasted since the middle of the day, they did no great violence to their own inclinations by falling on it tooth and nail. It took rather longer to get through than might have been expected; for, half a dozen times, when they thought they had finished, Mrs. Lupin exposed the fallacy of that impression triumphantly. But at last, in the course of time and nature, they gave in. Then, sitting with their slippered feet stretched out upon the kitchen hearth (which was wonderfully comforting, for the night had grown by this time raw and chilly), and looking with involun-

tary admiration at their dimpled, buxom, blooming hostess, as the firelight sparkled in her eyes and glimmered in her raven hair, they composed themselves to listen to her news.

Many were the exclamations of surprise which interrupted her, when she told them of the separation between Mr. Pecksniff and his daughters, and between the same good gentleman and Mr. Pinch. But these were nothing to the indignant demonstrations of Martin, when she related, as the common talk of the neighbourhood, what entire possession he had obtained over the mind and person of old Mr. Chuzzlewit, and what high honour he designed for Mary. On receipt of this intelligence, Martin's slippers flew off in a twinkling, and he began pulling on his wet boots with that indefinite intention of going somewhere instantly and doing something to somebody, which is the first safety-valve of a hot temper.

"He!" said Martin, "smooth-tongued villain that he is! He! Give me that other boot, Mark!"

"Where was you a thinking of going to, sir?" inquired Mr. Tapley, drying the sole at the fire, and looking coolly at it as he spoke, as if it were a slice of toast.

"Where!" repeated Martin. "You don't suppose I am going to remain here, do you?"

The imperturbable Mark confessed that he did.

"You do!" retorted Martin angrily. "I am much obliged to you. What do you take me for?"

"I take you for what you are, sir," said Mark; "and consequently, am quite sure that whatever you do will be right and sensible. The boot, sir."

Martin darted an impatient look at him, without taking it, and walked rapidly up and down the kitchen several times, with one boot and a stocking on. But, mindful of his Eden resolution, he had already gained many victories over himself when Mark was in the case, and he resolved to conquer now. So he came back to the boot-jack, laid his hand on Mark's shoulder to steady himself, pulled the boot off, picked up his slippers, put them on, and sat down again. He could not help thrusting his hands to the very bottom of his pockets, and muttering at intervals, "Pecksniff too! That fellow! Upon my soul! In-deed! What next?" and so forth; nor could he help occasionally shaking his first at the chimney, with a very threatening countenance: but this did not last long; and he heard

Mrs. Lupin out, if not with composure, at all events in silence.

"As to Mr. Pecksniff himself," observed the hostess in conclusion, spreading out the skirts of her gown with both hands, and nodding her head a great many times as she did so, "I don't know what to say. Somebody must have poisoned his mind, or influenced him in some extraordinary way. I cannot believe that such a noble-spoken gentleman would go and do wrong of his own accord!"

A noble-spoken gentleman! How many people are there in the world, who, for no better reason, uphold their Pecksniffs to the last, and abandon virtuous men, when Pecksniffs breathe upon them!

"As to Mr. Pinch," pursued the landlady, "if ever there was a dear, good, pleasant, worthy soul alive, Pinch, and no other, is his name. But how do we know that old Mr. Chuzzlewit himself was not the cause of difference arising between him and Mr. Pecksniff? No one but themselves can tell; for Mr. Pinch has a proud spirit, though he has such a quiet way; and when he left us, and was so sorry to go, he scorned to make his story good, even to me."

"Poor old Tom!" said Martin, in a tone that sounded like remorse.

"It 's a comfort to know," resumed the landlady, "that he has his sister living with him, and is doing well. Only yesterday he sent me back, by post, a little" — here the color came into her cheeks — "a little trifle I was bold enough to lend him when he went away; saying, with many thanks, that he had good employment, and did n't want it. It was the same note; he had n't broken it. I never thought I could have been so little pleased to see a bank-note come back to me as I was to see that."

"Kindly said, and heartily!" said Martin. "Is it not, Mark?"

"She can't say anything as does not possess them qualities," returned Mr. Tapley; "which as much belong to the Dragon as its licence. And now that we have got quite cool and fresh to the subject again, sir, what will you do? If you 're not proud, and can make up your mind to go through with what you spoke of, coming along, that 's the course for you to take. If you started wrong with your grandfather (which you 'll

excuse my taking the liberty of saying, appears to have been the case), up with you, sir, and tell him so, and make an appeal to his affections. Don't stand out. He 's a great deal older than you, and if he was hasty, you was hasty too. Give way, sir, give way."

The eloquence of Mr. Tapley was not without its effect on Martin, but he still hesitated, and expressed his reason thus: —

"That 's all very true, and perfectly correct, Mark; and if it were a mere question of humbling myself before *him*, I would not consider it twice. But don't you see, that being wholly under this hypocrite's government, and having (if what we hear be true) no mind or will of his own, I throw myself, in fact not at his feet, but at the feet of Mr. Pecksniff? And when I am rejected and spurned away," said Martin, turning crimson at the thought, "it is not by him, my own blood stirred against me, but by Pecksniff — Pecksniff, Mark!"

"Well, but we know beforehand," returned the politic Mr. Tapley, "that Pecksniff is a wagabond, a scoundrel, and a willain."

"A most pernicious villain!" said Martin.

"A most pernicious willain. We know that beforehand, sir; and, consequently, it 's no shame to be defeated by Pecksniff!" cried Mr. Tapley, in the fervour of his eloquence. "Who 's he! It 's not in the natur of Pecksniff to shame *us*, unless he agreed with us, or done us a service; and, in case he offered any outdacity of that description, we could express our sentiments in the English language, I hope? Pecksniff!" repeated Mr. Tapley, with ineffable disdain. "What 's Pecksniff, who 's Pecksniff, where 's Pecksniff, that he 's to be so much considered? We 're not a calculating for ourselves;" he laid uncommon emphasis on the last syllable of that word, and looked full in Martin's face; "we 're making an effort for a young lady likewise as has undergone her share; and whatever little hope we have, this here Pecksniff is not to stand in its way, I expect. I never heerd of any act of Parliament as was made by Pecksniff. Pecksniff! Why, I would n't see the man myself; I would n't hear him; I would n't choose to know he was in company. I 'd scrape my shoes on the scraper of the door, and call that Pecksniff, if you liked; but I would n't condescend no further."

The amazement of Mrs. Lupin, and indeed of Mr. Tapley

himself for that matter, at this impassioned flow of language, was immense. But Martin, after looking thoughtfully at the fire for a short time, said: —

"You are right, Mark. Right or wrong, it shall be done. I 'll do it."

"One word more, sir," returned Mark. "Only think of him so far, as not to give him a handle against you. Don't you do anything secret, that he can report before you get there. Don't you even see Miss Mary in the morning, but let this here dear friend of ours" — Mr. Tapley bestowed a smile upon the hostess —"prepare her for what 's a going to happen, and carry any little message as may be agreeable. She knows how. Don't you?" Mrs. Lupin laughed and tossed her head. "Then you go in, bold and free as a gentleman should. 'I have n't done nothing underhanded,' says you. 'I have n't been a skulking about the premises, here I am, for-give me, I ask your pardon, God Bless You!'"

Martin smiled, but felt that it was good advice notwithstanding, and resolved to act upon it. When they had ascertained from Mrs. Lupin that Pecksniff had already returned from the great ceremonial at which they had beheld him in his glory, and when they had fully arranged the order of their proceedings, they went to bed, intent upon the morrow.

In pursuance of their project as agreed upon at this discussion, Mr. Tapley issued forth next morning, after breakfast, charged with a letter from Martin to his grandfather, requesting leave to wait upon him for a few minutes. And postponing as he went along the congratulations of his numerous friends until a more convenient season, he soon arrived at Mr. Pecksniff's house. At that gentleman's door — with a face so immovable that it would have been next to an impossibility for the most acute physiognomist to determine what he was thinking about, or whether he was thinking at all — he straightway knocked.

A person of Mr. Tapley's observation could not long remain insensible to the fact that Mr. Pecksniff was making the end of his nose very blunt against the glass of the parlour window, in an angular attempt to discover who had knocked at the door. Nor was Mr. Tapley slow to baffle this movement on the part of the enemy, by perching himself on the top step, and presenting the crown of his hat in that direction. But possibly Mr.

Pecksniff had already seen him, for Mark soon heard his shoes creaking, as he advanced to open the door with his own hands.

Mr. Pecksniff was as cheerful as ever, and sang a little song in the passage.

"How d' ye do, sir?" said Mark.

"Oh!" cried Mr. Pecksniff. "Tapley, I believe? The Prodigal returned! We don't want any beer, my friend."

"Thankee, sir," said Mark. "I could n't accommodate you, if you did. A letter, sir. Wait for an answer."

"For me?" cried Mr. Pecksniff. "And an answer, eh?"

"Not for you, I think, sir," said Mark, pointing out the direction. "Chuzzlewit, I believe the name is, sir."

"Oh," returned Mr. Pecksniff. "Thank you. Yes. Who 's it from, my good young man?"

"The gentleman it comes from, wrote his name inside, sir," returned Mr. Tapley with extreme politeness. "I see him a signing of it at the end, while I was a waitin'."

"And he said he wanted an answer, did he?" asked Mr. Pecksniff in his most persuasive manner.

Mark replied in the affirmative.

"He shall have an answer. Certainly," said Mr. Pecksniff, tearing the letter into small pieces as mildly as if that were the most flattering attention a correspondent could receive. "Have the goodness to give him that, with my compliments, if you please. Good morning!" Whereupon he handed Mark the scraps, retired, and shut the door.

Mark thought it prudent to subdue his personal emotions, and return to Martin, at the Dragon. They were not unprepared for such a reception, and suffered an hour or so to elapse before making another attempt. When this interval had gone by, they returned to Mr. Pecksniff's house in company. Martin knocked this time, while Mr. Tapley prepared himself to keep the door open with his foot and shoulder, when anybody came, and by that means secure an enforced parley. But this precaution was needless, for the servant-girl appeared almost immediately. Brushing quickly past her as he had resolved in such a case to do, Martin (closely followed by his faithful ally) opened the door of that parlour in which he knew a visitor was most likely to be found; passed at once into the room; and stood, without a word of notice or announcement, in the presence of his grandfather.

Mr. Pecksniff also was in the room, and Mary. In the swift instant of their mutual recognition, Martin saw the old man droop his gray head, and hide his face in his hands.

It smote him to the heart. In his most selfish and most careless day, this lingering remnant of the old man's ancient love, this buttress of a ruined tower he had built up in the time gone by with so much pride and hope, would have caused a pang in Martin's heart. But now, changed for the better in his worst respect; looking through an altered medium on his former friend, the guardian of his childhood, so broken and bowed down — resentment, sullenness, self-confidence, and pride were all swept away, before the starting tears upon the withered cheeks. He could not bear to see them. He could not bear to think they fell at sight of him. He could not bear to view reflected in them the reproachful and irrevocable Past.

He hurriedly advanced, to seize the old man's hand in his, when Mr. Pecksniff interposed himself between them.

"No, young man!" said Mr. Pecksniff, striking himself upon the breast, and stretching out his other arm towards his guest as if it were a wing to shelter him. "No, sir. None of that. Strike here, sir, here! Launch your arrows at me, sir, if you 'll have the goodness; not at Him!"

"Grandfather!" cried Martin. "Hear me! I implore you, let me speak!"

"Would you, sir! Would you!" said Mr. Pecksniff, dodging about, so as to keep himself always between them. "Is it not enough, sir, that you come into my house like a thief in the night, or I should rather say, for we can never be too particular on the subject of Truth, like a thief in the daytime, bringing your dissolute companions with you, to plant themselves with their backs against the insides of parlour doors, and prevent the entrance or issuing forth of any of my household;" Mark had taken up this position, and held it quite unmoved; "but would you also strike at venerable Virtue? Would you? Know that it is not defenceless. I will be its shield, young man. Assail me. Come on, sir. Fire away!"

"Pecksniff," said the old man, in a feeble voice. "Calm yourself. Be quiet."

"I can't be calm," cried Mr. Pecksniff, "and I won't be quiet. My benefactor and my friend! Shall even my house be no refuge for your hoary pillow!"

"Stand aside!" said the old man, stretching out his hand; "and let me see what it is I used to love so dearly."

"It is right that you should see it, my friend," said Mr. Pecksniff. "It is well that you should see it, my noble sir. It is desirable that you should contemplate it in its true proportions. Behold it! There it is, sir. There it is!"

Martin could hardly be a mortal man, and not express in his face something of the anger and disdain with which Mr. Pecksniff inspired him. But beyond this he evinced no knowledge whatever of that gentleman's presence or existence. True he had once, and that at first, glanced at him involuntarily, and with supreme contempt; but for any other heed he took of him, there might have been nothing in his place save empty air.

As Mr. Pecksniff withdrew from between them, agreeably to the wish just now expressed (which he did, during the delivery of the observations last recorded), old Martin, who had taken Mary Graham's hand in his, and whispered kindly to her, as telling her she had no cause to be alarmed, gently pushed her from him, behind his chair; and looked steadily at his grandson.

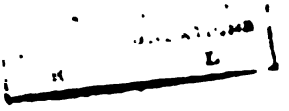
"And that," he said, "is he. Ah! that is he! Say what you wish to say. But come no nearer."

"His sense of justice is so fine," said Mr. Pecksniff, "that he will hear even him, although he knows beforehand that nothing can come of it. Ingenuous mind!" Mr. Pecksniff did not address himself immediately to any person in saying this, but assuming the position of the Chorus in a Greek Tragedy, delivered his opinion as a commentary on the proceedings.

"Grandfather!" said Martin, with great earnestness. "From a painful journey, from a hard life, from a sick bed, from privation and distress, from gloom and disappointment, from almost hopelessness and despair, I have come back to you."

"Rovers of this sort," observed Mr. Pecksniff as Chorus, "very commonly come back when they find they don't meet with the success they expected in their marauding ravages."

"But for this faithful man," said Martin, turning towards Mark, "whom I first knew in this place, and who went away with me voluntarily, as a servant, but has been, throughout,



..y zealous and devoted friend; but for him I must have died ..oad. Far from home, far from any help or consolation; far ..m the probability even of my wretched fate being ever ..own to any one who cared to hear it — oh, that you would ..t me say, of being known to you!"

The old man looked at Mr. Pecksniff. Mr. Pecksniff ..ked at him. "Did you speak, my worthy sir?" said Mr. ..cksniff, with a smile. The old man answered in the nega..ve. "I know what you thought," said Mr. Pecksniff, with ..other smile. "Let him go on, my friend. The develop..ent of self-interest in the human mind is always a curious ..dy. Let him go on, sir."

"Go on!" observed the old man; in a mechanical obedience, it appeared, to Mr. Pecksniff's suggestion.

"I have been so wretched and so poor," said Martin, "that I am indebted to the charitable help of a stranger, in a land of strangers, for the means of returning here. All this tells against me in your mind, I know. I have given you cause to think I have been driven here wholly by want, and have not been led on, in any degree, by affection or regret. When I parted from you, Grandfather, I deserved that suspicion, but I do not now. I do not now."

The Chorus put its hand in its waistcoat, and smiled. "Let him go on, my worthy sir," it said. "I know what you are thinking of, but don't express it prematurely."

Old Martin raised his eyes to Mr. Pecksniff's face, and appearing to derive renewed instruction from his looks and words, said once again: —

"Go on!"

"I have little more to say," returned Martin. "And as I say it now, with little or no hope, Grandfather, whatever dawn of hope I had on entering the room, believe it to be true. At least believe it to be true."

"Beautiful Truth!" exclaimed the Chorus, looking upward. "How is your name profaned by vicious persons! You don't live in a well, my holy principle, but on the lips of false mankind. It is hard to bear with mankind, dear sir," — addressing the elder Mr. Chuzzlewit — "but let us do so, meekly. It is our duty so to do. Let us be among the Few who do their duty. If," pursued the Chorus, soaring up into a lofty flight, "as the poet informs us, England expects Every man to do his

duty, England is the most sanguine country on the face of the earth, and will find itself continually disappointed."

"Upon that subject," said Martin, looking calmly at the old man as he spoke, but glancing once at Mary, whose face was now buried in her hands, upon the back of his easy-chair; "upon that subject which first occasioned a division between us, my mind and heart are incapable of change. Whatever influence they have undergone since that unhappy time has not been one to weaken, but to strengthen me. I cannot profess sorrow for that, nor irresolution in that, nor shame in that. Nor would you wish me, I know. But that I might have trusted to your love, if I had thrown myself manfully upon it; that I might have won you over, with ease, if I had been more yielding, and more considerate; that I should have best remembered myself in forgetting myself, and recollecting you; reflection, solitude, and misery, have taught me. I came, resolved to say this, and to ask your forgiveness, not so much in hope for the future, as in regret for the past; for all that I would ask of you is that you would aid me to live. Help me to get honest work to do, and I would do it. My condition places me at the disadvantage of seeming to have only my selfish ends to serve, but try if that be so, or not. Try if I be self-willed, obdurate, and haughty, as I was; or have been disciplined in a rough school. Let the voice of nature and association plead between us, Grandfather; and do not, for one fault, however thankless, quite reject me!"

As he ceased, the gray head of the old man drooped again; and he concealed his face behind his outspread fingers.

"My dear sir," cried Mr. Pecksniff, bending over him, "you must not give way to this. It is very natural, and very amiable, but you must not allow the shameless conduct of one whom you long ago cast off to move you so far. Rouse yourself. Think," said Mr. Pecksniff, "think of Me, my friend."

"I will," returned old Martin, looking up into his face. "You recall me to myself. I will."

"Why, what," said Mr. Pecksniff, sitting down beside him in a chair which he drew up for the purpose, and tapping him playfully on the arm, "what is the matter with my strong-minded compatriot, if I may venture to take the liberty of calling him by that endearing expression! Shall I have to scold my coadjutor, or to reason with an intellect like his? I think not."

"No, no. There is no occasion," said the old man. "A momentary feeling. Nothing more."

"Indignation," observed Mr. Pecksniff, "*will* bring the scalding tear into the honest eye, I know"—he wiped his own elaborately. "But we have higher duties to perform than that. Rouse yourself, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Shall I give expression to your thoughts, my friend?"

"Yes," said old Martin, leaning back in his chair, and looking at him, half in vacancy and half in admiration, as if he were fascinated by the man. "Speak for me, Pecksniff. Thank you. You are true to me. Thank you!"

"Do not unman me, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his hand vigorously, "or I shall be unequal to the task. It is not agreeable to my feelings, my good sir, to address the person who is now before us, for when I ejected him from this house, after hearing of his unnatural conduct from your lips, I renounced communication with him for ever. But you desire it, and that is sufficient. Young man! The door is immediately behind the companion of your infamy. Blush if you can: begone without a blush, if you can't."

Martin looked as steadily at his grandfather as if there had been a dead silence all this time. The old man looked no less steadily at Mr. Pecksniff.

"When I ordered you to leave this house upon the last occasion of your being dismissed from it with disgrace," said Mr. Pecksniff; "when, stung and stimulated beyond endurance by your shameless conduct to this extraordinarily noble-minded individual, I exclaimed 'Go forth!' I told you that I wept for your depravity. Do not suppose that the tear which stands in my eye at this moment is shed for you. It is shed for him, sir. It is shed for him."

Here Mr. Pecksniff, accidentally dropping the tear in question on a bald part of Mr. Chuzzlewit's head, wiped the place with his pocket-handkerchief, and begged pardon.

"It is shed for him, sir, whom you seek to make the victim of your arts," said Mr. Pecksniff; "whom you seek to plunder, to deceive, and to mislead. It is shed in sympathy with him, and admiration of him; not in pity for him, for happily he knows what you are. You shall not wrong him further, sir, in any way," said Mr. Pecksniff, quite transported with enthusiasm, "while I have life. You may bestride my senseless

corse, sir. That is very likely. I can imagine a mind like yours deriving great satisfaction from any measure of that kind. But while I continue to be called upon to exist, sir, you must strike at him through me. Ay!" said Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his head at Martin with indignant jocularity; "and in such a cause you will find me, my young sir, an Ugly Customer!"

Still Martin looked steadily and mildly at his grandfather. "Will you give me no answer," he said, at length, "not a word?"

"You hear what has been said," replied the old man, without averting his eyes from the face of Mr. Pecksniff, who nodded encouragingly.

"I have not heard your voice. I have not heard your spirit," returned Martin.

"Tell him again," said the old man, still gazing up in Mr. Pecksniff's face.

"I only hear," replied Martin, strong in his purpose from the first, and stronger in it as he felt how Pecksniff winced and shrunk beneath his contempt; "I only hear what you say to me, Grandfather."

Perhaps it was well for Mr. Pecksniff that his venerable friend found in his (Mr. Pecksniff's) features an exclusive and engrossing object of contemplation, for if his eyes had gone astray, and he had compared young Martin's bearing with that of his zealous defender, the latter disinterested gentleman would scarcely have shown to greater advantage than on the memorable afternoon when he took Tom Pinch's last receipt in full of all demands. One really might have thought there was some quality in Mr. Pecksniff — an emanation from the brightness and purity within him perhaps — which set off and adorned his foes, they looked so gallant and so manly beside him.

"Not a word?" said Martin, for the second time.

"I remember that I have a word to say, Pecksniff," observed the old man. "But a word. You spoke of being indebted to the charitable help of some stranger for the means of returning to England. Who is he? And what help in money did he render you?"

Although he asked this question of Martin, he did not look towards him, but kept his eyes on Mr. Pecksniff as before. It appeared to have become a habit with him, both in a literal and figurative sense, to look to Mr. Pecksniff alone.

Martin took out his pencil, tore a leaf from his pocket-book, and hastily wrote down the particulars of his debt to Mr. Pecksniff. The old man stretched out his hand for the paper and took it; but his eyes did not wander from Mr. Pecksniff's face.

"It would be a poor pride and a false humility," said Martin, in a low voice, "to say I do not wish that to be paid, or that I have any present hope of being able to pay it. But I never felt my poverty so deeply as I feel it now."

"Read it to me, Pecksniff," said the old man.

Mr. Pecksniff, after approaching the perusal of the paper as if it were a manuscript confession of a murder, complied.

"I think, Pecksniff," said old Martin, "I could wish that he be discharged. I should not like the lender, who was a friend, who had no opportunity of making inquiry, and who did (as he thought) a kind action, to suffer."

"An honourable sentiment, my dear sir. Your own entirely. But a dangerous precedent," said Mr. Pecksniff, "permit me to suggest."

"It shall not be a precedent," returned the old man. "It is the only recognition of him. But we will talk of it again. You shall advise me. There is nothing else?"

"Nothing else," said Mr. Pecksniff buoyantly, "but for you to recover this intrusion — this cowardly and indefensible outrage on your feelings — with all possible despatch, and smile again."

"You have nothing more to say?" inquired the old man, laying his hand with unusual earnestness on Mr. Pecksniff's sleeve.

Mr. Pecksniff would not say what rose to his lips. For reproaches, he observed, were useless.

"You have nothing at all to urge? You are sure of that? If you have, no matter what it is, speak freely. I will oppose nothing that you ask of me," said the old man.

The tears rose in such abundance to Mr. Pecksniff's eyes at this proof of unlimited confidence on the part of his friend, that he was fain to clasp the bridge of his nose convulsively before he could at all compose himself. When he had the power of utterance again, he said, with great emotion, that he hoped he should live to deserve this; and added that he had no other observation whatever to make.

For a few moments the old man sat looking at him, with that blank and motionless expression which is not uncommon in the faces of those whose faculties are on the wane, in age. But he rose up firmly too, and walked towards the door, from which Mark withdrew to make way for him.

The obsequious Mr. Pecksniff proffered his arm. The old man took it. Turning at the door, he said to Martin, waving him off with his hand: —

"You have heard him. Go away. It is all over. Go!"

Mr. Pecksniff murmured certain cheering expressions of sympathy and encouragement as they retired; and Martin, awakening from the stupor into which the closing portion of this scene had plunged him, to the opportunity afforded by their departure, caught the innocent cause of all in his embrace, and pressed her to his heart.

"Dear girl!" said Martin. "He has not changed you. Why, what an impotent and harmless knave the fellow is!"

"You have restrained yourself so nobly! You have borne so much!"

"Restrained myself!" cried Martin cheerfully. "You were by, and were unchanged, I knew. What more advantage did I want? The sight of me was such a bitterness to the dog, that I had my triumph in his being forced to endure it. But tell me, love — for the few hasty words we can exchange now are precious — what is this which has been rumoured to me? Is it true that you are persecuted by this knave's addresses?"

"I was, dear Martin, and to some extent am now; but my chief source of unhappiness has been anxiety for you. Why did you leave us in such terrible suspense?"

"Sickness, distance; the dread of hinting at our real condition, the impossibility of concealing it except in perfect silence: the knowledge that the truth would have pained you infinitely more than uncertainty and doubt," said Martin hurriedly — as indeed everything else was done and said, in those few hurried moments — "were the causes of my writing only once. But Pecksniff? You need n't fear to tell me the whole tale, for you saw me with him face to face, hearing him speak, and not taking him by the throat, — what is the history of his pursuit of you? Is it known to my grandfather?"

"Yes."

"And he assists him in it?"

"No," she answered eagerly.

"Thank Heaven," cried Martin, "that it leaves his mind unclouded in that one respect!"

"I do not think," said Mary, "it was known to him at first. When this man had sufficiently prepared his mind, he revealed it to him by degrees. I think so, but I only know it from my own impression, not from anything they told me. Then he spoke to me alone."

"My grandfather did?" said Martin.

"Yes — spoke to me alone, and told me — "

"What the hound had said!" cried Martin. "Don't repeat it."

"And said I knew well what qualities he possessed; that he was moderately rich, in good repute, and high in his favour and confidence. But seeing me very much distressed, he said that he would not control or force my inclinations, but would content himself with telling me the fact. He would not pain me by dwelling on it, or reverting to it; nor has he ever done since, but has truly kept his word."

"The man himself" — asked Martin.

"He has had few opportunities of pursuing his suit. I have never walked out alone, or remained alone an instant in his presence. Dear Martin, I must tell you," she continued, "that the kindness of your grandfather to me remains unchanged. I am his companion still. An indescribable tenderness and compassion seem to have mingled themselves with his old regard; and if I were his only child, I could not have a gentler father. What former fancy or old habit survives in him, when his heart has turned so cold to you, is a mystery I cannot penetrate; but it has been, and it is, a happiness to me that I remained true to him; that if he should wake from his delusion, even at the point of death, I am here, love, to recall you to his thoughts."

Martin looked with admiration on her glowing face, and pressed his lips to hers.

"I have sometimes heard, and read," she said, "that those whose powers had been enfeebled long ago, and whose lives had faded, as it were, into a dream, have been known to rouse themselves before death, and inquire for familiar faces once very dear to them; but forgotten, unrecognised, hated even, in the mean time. Think, if with his old impressions of this

man, he should suddenly resume his former self, and find in him his only friend!"

"I would not urge you to abandon him, dearest," said Martin, "though I could count the years we are to wear out asunder. But the influence this fellow exercises over him has steadily increased, I fear."

She could not help admitting that. Steadily, imperceptibly, and surely, until now it was paramount and supreme. She herself had none; and yet he treated her with more affection than at any previous time. Martin thought the inconsistency a part of his weakness and decay.

"Does the influence extend to fear?" said Martin. "Is he timid of asserting his own opinion in the presence of this infatuation? I fancied so just now."

"I have thought so often. Often when we are sitting alone, almost as we used to do, and I have been reading a favourite book to him, or he has been talking quite cheerfully, I have observed that the entrance of Mr. Pecksniff has changed his whole demeanour. He has broken off immediately, and become what you have seen to-day. When we first came here he had his impetuous outbreaks, in which it was not easy for Mr. Pecksniff with his utmost plausibility to appease him. But these have long since dwindled away. He defers to him in everything, and has no opinion upon any question but that which is forced upon him by this treacherous man."

Such was the account, rapidly furnished in whispers, and interrupted, brief as it was, by many false alarms of Mr. Pecksniff's return, which Martin received of his grandfather's decline, and of that good gentleman's ascendancy. He heard of Tom Pinch too, and Jonas too, with not a little about himself into the bargain; for though lovers are remarkable for leaving a great deal unsaid on all occasions, and very properly desiring to come back and say it, they are remarkable also for a wonderful power of condensation; and can, in one way or other, give utterance to more language — eloquent language — in any given short space of time, than all the six hundred and fifty-eight members in the Commons House of Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; who are strong lovers, no doubt, but of their country only, which makes all the difference; for in a passion of that kind (which is not always returned), it is the custom to use as many words as possible, and express nothing whatever.

A caution from Mr. Tapley; a hasty interchange of farewells, and of something else which the proverb says must not be told of afterwards; a white hand held out to Mr. Tapley himself, which he kissed with the devotion of a knight-errant; more farewells, more something else's; a parting word from Martin that he would write from London and would do great things there yet (Heaven knows what, but he quite believed it); and Mark and he stood on the outside of the Pecksniffian halls.

"A short interview after such an absence!" said Martin sorrowfully. "But we are well out of the house. We might have placed ourselves in a false position by remaining there, even so long, Mark."

"I don't know about ourselves, sir," he returned; "but somebody else would have got into a false position, if he had happened to come back again while we was there. I had the door all ready, sir. If Pecksniff had showed his head, or had only so much as listened behind it, I would have caught him like a walnut. He's the sort of man," added Mr. Tapley musing, "as would squeeze soft, I know."

A person who was evidently going to Mr. Pecksniff's house passed them at this moment. He raised his eyes at the mention of the architect's name; and when he had gone on a few yards, stopped, and gazed at them. Mr. Tapley, also, looked over his shoulder, and so did Martin; for the stranger, as he passed, had looked very sharply at them.

"Who may that be, I wonder!" said Martin. "The face seems familiar to me, but I don't know the man."

"He seems to have a amiable desire that his face should be tolerable familiar to us," said Mr. Tapley, "for he's a staring pretty hard. He'd better not waste his beauty, for he ain't got much to spare."

Coming in sight of the Dragon, they saw a travelling carriage at the door.

"And a Salisbury carriage, eh!" said Mr. Tapley. "That's what he came in, depend upon it. What's in the wind now? A new pupil, I shouldn't wonder. P'raps it's a order for another grammar-school, of the same pattern as the last."

Before they could enter at the door, Mrs. Lupin came running out; and beckoning them to the carriage showed them a portmanteau with the name of CHUZZLEWIT upon it.

"Miss Pecksniff's husband that was," said the good woman

to Martin. "I did n't know what terms you might be on, and was quite in a worry till you came back."

"He and I have never interchanged a word yet," observed Martin; "and as I have no wish to be better or worse acquainted with him, I will not put myself in his way. We passed him on the road, I have no doubt. I am glad he timed his coming, as he did. Upon my word, Miss Pecksniff's husband travels gaily!"

"A very fine-looking gentleman with him — in the best room now," whispered Mrs. Lupin, glancing up at the window as they went into the house. "He has ordered everything that can be got for dinner; and has the glossiest mustaches and whiskers ever you saw."

"Has he?" cried Martin, "why, then we 'll endeavour to avoid him too, in the hope that our self-denial may be strong enough for the sacrifice. It is only for a few hours," said Martin, dropping wearily into a chair behind the little screen in the bar. "Our visit has met with no success, my dear Mrs. Lupin, and I must go to London."

"Dear, dear!" cried the hostess.

"Yes. One foul wind no more makes a winter than one swallow makes a summer. I 'll try it again. Tom Pinch has succeeded; with his advice to guide me, I may do the same. I took Tom under my protection once, God save the mark!" said Martin, with a melancholy smile; "and promised I would make his fortune. Perhaps Tom will take me under *his* protection now, and teach me how to earn my bread."

CHAPTER XLIV

FURTHER CONTINUATION OF THE ENTERPRISE OF MR. JONAS AND HIS FRIEND.

It was a special quality, among the many admirable qualities possessed by Mr. Pecksniff, that the more he was found out the more hypocrisy he practised. Let him be discomfited in one quarter, and he refreshed and recompensed himself by carrying the war into another. If his workings and windings were detected by A, so much the greater reason was there for practising without loss of time on B, if it were only to keep his hand in. He had never been such a saintly and improving spectacle to all about him as after his detection by Thomas Pinch. He had scarcely ever been at once so tender in his humanity, and so dignified and exalted in his virtue, as when young Martin's scorn was fresh and hot upon him.

Having this large stock of superfluous sentiment and morality on hand which must positively be cleared off at any sacrifice, Mr. Pecksniff no sooner heard his son-in-law announced, than he regarded him as a kind of wholesale or general order, to be immediately executed. Descending, therefore, swiftly to the parlour, and clasping the young man in his arms, he exclaimed, with looks and gestures that denoted the perturbation of his spirit:—

"Jonas! My child—she is well? There is nothing the matter?"

"What, you 're at it again, are you?" replied his son-in-law. "Even with me? Get away with you, will you?"

"Tell me she is well, then," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Tell me she is well, my Boy!"

"She 's well enough," retorted Jonas, disengaging himself. "There 's nothing the matter with *her*."

"There is nothing the matter with her!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, sitting down in the nearest chair, and rubbing up his hair. "Fie upon my weakness! I cannot help it, Jonas.

Thank you. I am better now. How is my other child; my eldest; my Cherrywerrychigo?" said Mr. Pecksniff, inventing a playful little name for her, in the restored lightness of his heart.

"She 's much about the same as usual," returned Mr. Jonas. "She sticks pretty close to the vinegar-bottle. You know she 's got a sweetheart, I suppose?"

"I have heard of it," said Mr. Pecksniff, "from headquarters; from my child herself. I will not deny that it moved me to contemplate the loss of my remaining daughter, Jonas — I am afraid we parents are selfish, I am afraid we are — but it has ever been the study of my life to qualify them for the domestic hearth, and it is a sphere which Cherry will adorn."

"She need adorn some sphere or other," observed his son-in-law, "for she ain't very ornamental in general."

"My girls are now provided for," said Mr. Pecksniff. "They are now happily provided for, and I have not laboured in vain!"

This is exactly what Mr. Pecksniff would have said, if one of his daughters had drawn a prize of thirty thousand pounds in the lottery, or if the other had picked up a valuable purse in the street, which nobody appeared to claim. In either of these cases, he would have invoked a patriarchal blessing on the fortunate head, with great solemnity, and would have taken immense credit to himself, as having meant it from the infant's cradle.

"Suppose we talk about something else, now," observed Jonas drily; "just for a change. Are you quite agreeable?"

"Quite," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Ah, you wag, you naughty wag! You laugh at poor old fond papa. Well! He deserves it. And he don't mind it either, for his feelings are their own reward. You have come to stay with me, Jonas?"

"No. I 've got a friend with me," said Jonas.

"Bring your friend!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, in a gush of hospitality. "Bring any number of your friends!"

"This ain't the sort of man to be brought," said Jonas contemptuously. "I think I see myself 'bringing' him to your house, for a treat! Thankee all the same; but he 's a little too near the top of the tree for that, Pecksniff."

The good man pricked up his ears; his interest was awakened. A position near the top of the tree was greatness,

virtue, goodness, sense, genius; or, it should rather be said, a dispensation from all, and in itself something immeasurably better than all — with Mr. Pecksniff. A man who was able to look down upon Mr. Pecksniff could not be looked up at, by that gentleman, with too great an amount of deference, or from a position of too much humility. So it always is with great spirits.

"I'll tell you what you may do, if you like," said Jonas, "you may come and dine with us at the Dragon. We were forced to come down to Salisbury last night, on some business, and I got him to bring me over here this morning, in his carriage; at least, not his own carriage, for we had a break-down in the night, but one we hired instead — it's all the same. Mind what you're about, you know. He's not used to all sorts; he only mixes with the best!"

"Some young nobleman who has been borrowing money of you at good interest, eh?" said Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his forefinger facetiously. "I shall be delighted to know the gay sprig."

"Borrowing!" echoed Jonas. "Borrowing! When you're a twentieth part as rich as he is, you may shut up shop! We should be pretty well off, if we could buy his furniture, and plate, and pictures, by clubbing together. A likely man to borrow, Mr. Montague! Why, since I was lucky enough (come! and I'll say, sharp enough, too) to get a share in the Insurance Office that he's President of, I've made — never mind what I've made," said Jonas, seeming to recover all at once his usual caution. "You know me pretty well, and I don't blab about such things. But, ecod, I've made a trifle."

"Really, my dear Jonas," cried Mr. Pecksniff, with much warmth, "a gentleman like this should receive some attention. Would he like to see the church? or if he has a taste for the fine arts — which I have no doubt he has, from the description you give of his circumstances — I can send him down a few portfolios. Salisbury Cathedral, my dear Jonas," said Mr. Pecksniff — the mention of the portfolios, and his anxiety to display himself to advantage, suggesting his usual phraseology in that regard —" is an edifice replete with venerable associations, and strikingly suggestive of the loftiest emotions. It is here we contemplate the work of bygone ages. It is here we listen to the swelling organ, as we stroll through the reverberating

aisles. We have drawings of this celebrated structure from the North, from the South, from the East, from the West, from the South-East, from the Nor'-West —"

During this digression, and indeed during the whole dialogue, Jonas had been rocking on his chair, with his hands in his pockets, and his head thrown cunningly on one side. He looked at Mr. Pecksniff now with such shrewd meaning twinkling in his eyes that Mr. Pecksniff stopped, and asked what he was going to say.

"Eccl!" he answered. "Pecksniff, if I knew how you meant to leave your money, I could put you in the way of doubling it in no time. It wouldn't be bad to keep a coach like this snug in the family. But you're such a deep one!"

"Jonas!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, much affected, "I am a man of a diplomatical character; my heart is in my hand. By far the greater part of the inconsiderable savings I have accumulated in the course of — I hope — a not dishonourable career, is already given, devised, and bequeathed (correct me, my dear Jonas, if I am technically wrong), with expressions of confidence which I will not repeat; and in securities which it is unnecessary to mention; to a person whom I can trust, whom I will not, whom I need not, name." Here he gave the hand of his son-in-law a fervent squeeze, as if he would have added, "God bless you; be very careful of it when you get it!"

Mr. Jonas only shook his head and laughed, and, seeming to think better of what he had had in his mind, said, "No. He would keep his own counsel." But as he observed that it would take a walk, Mr. Pecksniff insisted on accompanying him, remarking that he could leave a card for Mr. Montague as they went along, by way of gentleman-usher to himself at dinner-time; which he did.

In the course of their walk, Mr. Jonas affected to maintain that close reserve which had operated as a timely check upon him during the foregoing dialogue. And as he made no attempt to conciliate Mr. Pecksniff, but, on the contrary, was more churlish and rude to him than usual, that gentleman, so far from suspecting his real design, laid himself out to be attacked with advantage. For it is in the nature of a knave to think the tools with which he works indispensable to knavery; and knowing what he would do himself in such a case,

Mr. Pecksniff argued, "if this young man wanted anything of me for his own ends, he would be polite and deferential."

The more Jonas repelled him in his hints and inquiries, the more solicitous, therefore, Mr. Pecksniff became to be initiated into the golden mysteries at which he had obscurely glanced. Why should there be cold and worldly secrets, he observed, between relations? What was life without confidence? If the chosen husband of his daughter, the man to whom he had delivered her with so much pride and hope, such bounding and such beaming joy, if he were not a green spot in the barren waste of life, where was that Oasis to be found?

Little did Mr. Pecksniff think on what a very green spot he planted one foot at that moment! Little did he foresee when he said, "All is but dust!" how very shortly he would come down with his own!

Inch by inch, in his grudging and ill-conditioned way, sustained to the life for the hope of making Mr. Pecksniff suffer in that tender place, the pocket, where Jonas smarted so terribly himself, gave him an additional and malicious interest in the wiles he was set on to practise; inch by inch, and bit by bit, Jonas rather allowed the dazzling prospects of the Anglo-Bengalee establishment to escape him, than paraded them before his greedy listener. And in the same niggardly spirit, he left Mr. Pecksniff to infer, if he chose (which he *did* choose, of course), that a consciousness of not having any great natural gifts of speech and manner himself, rendered him desirous to have the credit of introducing to Mr. Montague some one who was well endowed in those respects, and so atone for his own deficiencies. Otherwise, he muttered discontentedly, he would have seen his beloved father-in-law "far enough off" before he would have taken him into his confidence.

Primed in this artful manner, Mr. Pecksniff presented himself at dinner-time in such a state of suavity, benevolence, cheerfulness, politeness, and cordiality, as even he had perhaps never attained before. The frankness of the country gentleman, the refinement of the artist, the good-humoured allowance of the man of the world; philanthropy, forbearance, piety, toleration, all blended together in a flexible adaptability to anything and everything; were expressed in Mr. Pecksniff, as he shook hands with the great speculator and capitalist.

"Welcome, respected sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, "to our hum-

ble village! We are a simple people; primitive clods, Mr. Montague; but we can appreciate the honour of your visit, as my dear son-in-law can testify. It is very strange," said Mr. Pecksniff, pressing his hand almost reverentially, "but I seem to know you. That towering forehead, my dear Jonas," said Mr. Pecksniff aside, "and those clustering masses of rich hair —I must have seen you, my dear sir, in the sparkling throng."

Nothing was more probable, they all agreed.

"I could have wished," said Mr. Pecksniff, "to have had the honour of introducing you to an elderly inmate of our house, to the uncle of our friend. Mr. Chuzzlewit, sir, would have been proud indeed to have taken you by the hand."

"Is the gentleman here now?" asked Montague, turning deeply red.

"He is," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"You said nothing about that, Chuzzlewit."

"I did n't suppose you 'd care to hear of it," returned Jonas. "You would n't care to know him, I can promise you."

"Jonas! my dear Jonas!" remonstrated Mr. Pecksniff. "Really!"

"Oh! it 's all very well for you to speak up for him," said Jonas. "You have nailed him. You 'll get a fortune by him."

"Oho! Is the wind in that quarter!" cried Montague. "Ha, ha, ha!" and here they all laughed — especially Mr. Pecksniff.

"No, no!" said that gentleman, clapping his son-in-law playfully upon the shoulder. "You must not believe all that my young relative says, Mr. Montague. You may believe him in official business, and trust him in official business, but you must not attach importance to his flights of fancy."

"Upon my life, Mr. Pecksniff," cried Montague, "I attach the greatest importance to that last observation of his. I trust and hope it 's true. Money cannot be turned and turned again quickly enough in the ordinary course, Mr. Pecksniff. There is nothing like building our fortunes on the weaknesses of mankind."

"Oh, fie! Oh, fie! Oh, fie, for shame!" cried Mr. Pecksniff. But they all laughed again — especially Mr. Pecksniff.

"I give you my honour that *we* do it," said Montague.

"Oh, fie, fie!" cried Mr. Pecksniff. "You are very pleasant. That I am sure you don't! That I am sure you don't! How *can* you, you know?"

Again they all laughed in concert; and again Mr. Pecksniff laughed especially.

This was very agreeable indeed. It was confidential, easy, straightforward, and still left Mr. Pecksniff in the position of being in a gentle way the Mentor of the party. The greatest achievements in the article of cookery that the Dragon had ever performed, were set before them; the oldest and best wines in the Dragon's cellar saw the light on that occasion; a thousand bubbles, indicative of the wealth and station of Mr. Montague in the depths of his pursuits, were constantly rising to the surface of the conversation; and they were as frank and merry as three honest men could be. Mr. Pecksniff thought it a pity (he said so) that Mr. Montague should think lightly of mankind and their weaknesses. He was anxious upon this subject; his mind ran upon it; in one way or another he was constantly coming back to it,— he must make a convert of him, he said. And as often as Mr. Montague repeated his sentiment about building fortunes on the weaknesses of mankind, and added frankly, "*We* do it!" just as often Mr. Pecksniff repeated "Oh, fie! Oh, fie, for shame! I am sure you don't. How *can* you, you know!" laying a greater stress each time on those last words.

The frequent repetition of this playful inquiry on the part of Mr. Pecksniff led at last to playful answers on the part of Mr. Montague; but after some little sharp-shooting on both sides, Mr. Pecksniff became grave, almost to tears; observing that if Mr. Montague would give him leave, he would drink the health of his young kinsman, Mr. Jonas — congratulating him upon the valuable and distinguished friendship he had formed, but envying him, he would confess, his usefulness to his fellow-creatures. For if he understood the objects of that Institution with which he was newly and advantageously connected — knowing them but imperfectly — they were calculated to do Good; and for his (Mr. Pecksniff's) part, if he could in any way promote them, he thought he would be able to lay his head upon his pillow every night, with an absolute certainty of going to sleep at once.

The transition from this accidental remark (for it was quite

accidental, and had fallen from Mr. Pecksniff in the openness of his soul), to the discussion of the subject as a matter of business, was easy. Books, papers, statements, tables, calculations of various kinds, were soon spread out before them; and as they were all framed with one object, it is not surprising that they should all have tended to one end. But still, whenever Montague enlarged upon the profits of the office, and said that as long as there were gulls upon the wing it must succeed, Mr. Pecksniff mildly said, "Oh, fie!"—and might indeed have remonstrated with him, but that he knew he was joking. Mr. Pecksniff did know he was joking; because he said so.

There never had been before, and there never would be again, such an opportunity for the investment of a considerable sum (the rate of advantage increased in proportion to the amount invested), as at that moment. The only time that had at all approached it was the time when Jonas had come into the concern; which made him ill-natured now, and inclined him to pick out a doubt in this place, and a flaw in that, and grumblingly to advise Mr. Pecksniff to think better of it. The sum which would complete the proprietorship in this snug concern was nearly equal to Mr. Pecksniff's whole hoard; not counting Mr. Chuzzlewit, that is to say, whom he looked upon as money in the Bank, the possession of which inclined him the more to make a dash with his own private sprats for the capture of such a whale as Mr. Montague described. The returns began almost immediately, and were immense. The end of it was, that Mr. Pecksniff agreed to become the last partner and proprietor in the Anglo-Bengalee, and made an appointment to dine with Mr. Montague, at Salisbury, on the next day but one, then and there to complete the negotiation.

It took so long to bring the subject to this head that it was nearly midnight when they parted. When Mr. Pecksniff walked down stairs to the door, he found Mrs. Lupin standing there, looking out.

"Ah, my good friend!" he said: "not abed yet! Contemplating the stars, Mrs. Lupin?"

"It 's a beautiful starlight night, sir."

"A beautiful starlight night," said Mr. Pecksniff, looking up. "Behold the planets, how they shine! Behold the—Those two persons who were here this morning, have left your house, I hope, Mrs. Lupin?"

"Yes, sir. They are gone."

"I am glad to hear it," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Behold the wonders of the firmament, Mrs. Lupin! How glorious is this scene! When I look up at those shining orbs, I think that each of them is winking to the other to take notice of the vanity of men's pursuits. My fellow-men!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his head in pity; "you are much mistaken; my erring relatives, you are much deceived! The stars are perfectly contented (I suppose so) in their several spheres. Why are not you? Oh! do not strive and struggle to enrich yourselves, or to get the better of each other, my deluded friends, but look up there, with me!"

Mrs. Lupin shook her head, and heaved a sigh. It was very affecting.

"Look up there, with me!" repeated Mr. Pecksniff, stretching out his hand; "with me, an humble individual who is also an Insect like yourselves. Can silver, gold, or precious stones sparkle like those constellations! I think not. Then do not thirst for silver, gold, or precious stones, but look up there, with me!"

With these words, the good man patted Mrs. Lupin's hand between his own, as if he would have added, "think of this, my good woman!" and walked away in a sort of ecstasy or rapture, with his hat under his arm.

Jonas sat in the attitude in which Mr. Pecksniff had left him, gazing moodily at his friend; who, surrounded by a heap of documents, was writing something on an oblong slip of paper.

"You mean to wait at Salisbury over the day after to-morrow, do you, then?" said Jonas.

"You heard our appointment," returned Montague, without raising his eyes. "In any case I should have waited to see after the boy."

They appeared to have changed places again; Montague being in high spirits, and Jonas gloomy and lowering.

"You don't want me, I suppose?" said Jonas.

"I want you to put your name here," he returned, glancing at him with a smile, "as soon as I have filled up the stamp. I may as well have your note of hand for that extra capital. That 's all I want. If you wish to go home, I can manage Mr. Pecksniff now, alone. There is a perfect understanding between us."

Jonas sat scowling at him as he wrote, in silence. When he had finished his writing, and had dried it on the blotting-paper in his travelling-desk, he looked up, and tossed the pen towards him.

"What, not a day's grace, not a day's trust, eh?" said Jonas bitterly. "Not after the pains I have taken with to-night's work?"

"To-night's work was a part of our bargain," replied Montague; "and so was this."

"You drive a hard bargain," said Jonas, advancing to the table. "You know best. Give it here!"

Montague gave him the paper. After pausing as if he could not make up his mind to put his name to it, Jonas dipped his pen hastily in the nearest inkstand, and began to write. But he had scarcely marked the paper when he started back, in a panic.

"Why, what the devil's this?" he said. "It's bloody!"

He had dipped the pen, as another moment showed, into red ink. But he attached a strange degree of importance to the mistake. He asked how it had come there, who had brought it, why it had been brought; and looked at Montague, at first, as if he thought he had put a trick upon him. Even when he used a different pen, and the right ink, he made some scratches on another paper first, as half-believing they would turn red also.

"Black enough, this time," he said, handing the note to Montague. "Good-by."

"Going now! How do you mean to get away from here?"

"I shall cross early in the morning, to the high road, before you are out of bed; and catch the day-coach going up. Good-by!"

"You are in a hurry!"

"I have Something to do," said Jonas. "Good-by!"

His friend looked after him as he went out, in surprise, which gradually gave place to an air of satisfaction and relief.

"It happens all the better. It brings about what I wanted. without any difficulty. I shall travel home alone."

CHAPTER XLV

IN WHICH TOM PINCH AND HIS SISTER TAKE A LITTLE PLEASURE; BUT QUITE IN A DOMESTIC WAY, AND WITH NO CEREMONY ABOUT IT.

Tom Pinch and his sister having to part, for the despatch of the morning's business, immediately after the dispersion of the other actors in the scene upon the wharf with which the reader has been already made acquainted, had no opportunity of discussing the subject at that time. But Tom in his solitary office, and Ruth in the triangular parlour, thought about nothing else all day; and, when their hour of meeting in the afternoon approached, they were very full of it, to be sure.

There was a little plot between them, that Tom should always come out of the Temple by one way; and that was past the fountain. Coming through Fountain Court, he was just to glance down the steps leading into Garden Court, and to look once all round him; and if Ruth had come to meet him, there he would see her; not sauntering, you understand (on account of the clerks), but coming briskly up, with the best little laugh upon her face that ever played in opposition to the fountain, and beat it all to nothing. For, fifty to one, Tom had been looking for her in the wrong direction, and had quite given her up, while she had been tripping towards him from the first — jingling that little reticule of hers (with all the keys in it) to attract his wandering observation.

Whether there was life enough left in the slow vegetation of Fountain Court for the smoky shrubs to have any consciousness of the brightest and purest-hearted little woman in the world, is a question for gardeners, and those who are learned in the loves of plants. But, that it was a good thing for that same paved yard to have such a delicate little figure flitting through it; that it passed like a smile from the grimy old houses, and the worn flag-stones, and left them duller, darker, sterner than before, there is no sort of doubt. The Temple fountain might have leaped up twenty feet to greet the spring of hopeful maid-

enhood, that in her person stole on, sparkling through the dry and dusty channels of the Law; the chirping sparrows, bred in Temple chinks and crannies, might have held their peace to listen to imaginary skylarks, as so fresh a little creature passed; the dingy boughs, unused to droop, otherwise than in their puny growth, might have bent down in a kindred gracefulness, to shed their benedictions on her graceful head; old love letters, shut up in iron boxes in the neighbouring offices, and made of no account among the heaps of family papers into which they had strayed, and of which, in their degeneracy, they formed a part, might have stirred and fluttered with a moment's recollection of their ancient tenderness, as she went lightly by. Anything might have happened that did not happen, and never will, for the love of Ruth.

Something happened, too, upon the afternoon of which the history treats. Not for her love. Oh, no! quite by accident, and without the least reference to her at all.

Either she was a little too soon, or Tom was a little too late —she was so precise in general, that she timed it to half a minute — but no Tom was there. Well! But was anybody else there, that she blushed so deeply, after looking round, and tripped off down the steps with such unusual expedition?

Why, the fact is, that Mr. Westlock was passing at that moment. The Temple is a public thoroughfare; they may write up on the gates that it is not, but so long as the gates are left open it is, and will be; and Mr. Westlock had as good a right to be there as anybody else. But why did she run away, then? Not being ill dressed, for she was much too neat for that, why did she run away? The brown hair that had fallen down beneath her bonnet, and had one impertinent imp of a false flower clinging to it, boastful of its licence before all men, *that* could not have been the cause, for it looked charming. Oh! foolish, panting, frightened little heart, why did she run away!

Merrily the tiny fountain played, and merrily the dimples sparkled on its sunny face. John Westlock hurried after her. Softly the whispering water broke and fell; and roguishly the dimples twinkled, as he stole upon her footsteps.

Oh, foolish, panting, timid little heart, why did she feign to be unconscious of his coming! Why wish herself so far away, yet be so flutteringly happy there!

"I felt sure it was you," said John, when he overtook her, in the sanctuary of Garden Court. "I knew I could n't be mistaken."

She was *so* surprised.

"You are waiting for your brother," said John. "Let me bear you company."

So light was the touch of the coy little hand, that he glanced down to assure himself he had it on his arm. But his glance, stopping for an instant at the bright eyes, forgot its first design, and went no farther.

They walked up and down three or four times, speaking about Tom and his mysterious employment. Now that was a very natural and innocent subject, surely. Then why, whenever Ruth lifted up her eyes, did she let them fall again immediately, and seek the uncongenial pavement of the court? They were not such eyes as shun the light; they were not such eyes as require to be hoarded to enhance their value. They were much too precious and too genuine to stand in need of arts like those. Somebody must have been looking at them!

They found out Tom, though, quickly enough. This pair of eyes descried him in the distance the moment he appeared. He was staring about him, as usual, in all directions but the right one; and was as obstinate in not looking towards them as if he had intended it. As it was plain that, being left to himself, he would walk away home, John Westlock darted off to stop him.

This made the approach of poor little Ruth, by herself, one of the most embarrassing of circumstances. There was Tom, manifesting extreme surprise (he had no presence of mind, that Tom, on small occasions); there was John, making as light of it as he could, but explaining at the same time, with most unnecessary elaboration; and here was she, coming towards them, with both of them looking at her, conscious of blushing to a terrible extent, but trying to throw up her eyebrows carelessly, and pout her rosy lips, as if she were the coolest and most unconcerned of little women.

Merrily the fountain plashed and plashed, until the dimples, merging into one another, swelled into a general smile, that covered the whole surface of the basin.

"What an extraordinary meeting!" said Tom. "I should never have dreamed of seeing you two together here."

"Quite accidental," John was heard to murmur.

"Exactly," cried Tom; "that 's what I mean, you know. If it was n't accidental, there would be nothing remarkable in it."

"To be sure," said John.

"Such an out-of-the-way place for you to have met in," pursued Tom, quite delighted. "Such an unlikely spot!"

John rather disputed that. On the contrary, he considered it a very likely spot, indeed. He was constantly passing to and fro there, he said. He should n't wonder if it were to happen again. His only wonder was that it had never happened before.

By this time Ruth had got round on the farther side of her brother, and had taken his arm. She was squeezing it now, as much as to say, "Are you going to stop here all day, you dear old blundering Tom?"

Tom answered the squeeze as if it had been a speech. "John," he said, "if you 'll give my sister your arm, we 'll take her between us, and walk on. I have a curious circumstance to relate to you. Our meeting could not have happened better."

Merrily the fountain leaped and danced, and merrily the smiling dimples twinkled and expanded more and more, until they broke into a laugh against the basin's rim, and vanished.

"Tom," said his friend, as they turned into the noisy street, "I have a proposition to make. It is, that you and your sister — if she will so far honour a poor bachelor's dwelling — give me a great pleasure, and come and dine with me."

"What, to-day?" cried Tom.

"Yes, to-day. It 's close by, you know. Pray, Miss Pinch, insist upon it. It will be very disinterested, for I have nothing to give you."

"Oh! you must not believe that, Ruth," said Tom. "He is the most tremendous fellow, in his housekeeping, that I ever heard of, for a single man. He ought to be Lord Mayor. Well! what do you say? Shall we go?"

"If you please, Tom," rejoined his dutiful little sister.

"But I mean," said Tom, regarding her with smiling admiration, "is there anything you ought to wear, and have n't got? I am sure I don't know, John; she may not be able to take her bonnet off, for anything I can tell."

There was a great deal of laughing at this, and there were divers compliments from John Westlock — not compliments, he said at least (and really he was right), but good, plain, honest truths, which no one could deny. Ruth laughed, and all that, but she made no objection; so it was an engagement.

"If I had known it a little sooner," said John, "I would have tried another pudding. Not in rivalry; but merely to exalt that famous one. I would n't on any account have had it made with suet."

"Why not?" asked Tom.

"Because that cookery book advises suet," said John Westlock; "and ours was made with flour and eggs."

"Oh, good gracious!" cried Tom. "Ours was made with flour and eggs, was it? Ha, ha, ha! A beefsteak-pudding made with flour and eggs! Why anybody knows better than that. *I* know better than that! Ha, ha, ha!"

It is unnecessary to say that Tom had been present at the making of the pudding, and had been a devoted believer in it all through. But he was so delighted to have this joke against his busy little sister, and was tickled to that degree at having found her out, that he stopped in Temple Bar to laugh; and it was no more to Tom that he was anathematised and knocked about by the surly passengers, than it would have been to a post; for he continued to exclaim with unabated good humour, "flour and eggs! a beefsteak-pudding made with flour and eggs!" until John Westlock and his sister fairly ran away from him, and left him to have his laugh out by himself — which he had, and then came dodging across the crowded street to them, with such sweet temper and tenderness (it was quite a tender joke of Tom's) beaming in his face, God bless it, that it might have purified the air, though Temple Bar had been, as in the golden days gone by, embellished with a row of rotting human heads.

There are snug chambers in those Inns where the bachelors live, and, for the desolate fellows they pretend to be, it is quite surprising how well they get on. John was very pathetic on the subject of his dreary life, and the deplorable makeshifts and apologetic contrivances it involved; but he really seemed to make himself pretty comfortable. His rooms were the perfection of neatness and convenience, at any rate; and if he

were anything but comfortable, the fault was certainly not theirs.

He had no sooner ushered Tom and his sister into his best room (where there was a beautiful little vase of fresh flowers on the table, all ready for Ruth — just as if he had expected her, Tom said), than seizing his hat, he bustled out again, in his most energetically bustling way; and presently came hurrying back, as they saw through the half-opened door, attended by a fiery-faced matron attired in a crunched bonnet, with particularly long strings to it hanging down her back; in conjunction with whom he instantly began to lay the cloth for dinner, polishing up the wine glasses with his own hands, brightening the silver top of the pepper-castor on his coat-sleeve, drawing corks and filling decanters, with a skill and expedition that were quite dazzling. And as if, in the course of this rubbing and polishing, he had rubbed an enchanted lamp or a magic ring, obedient to which there were twenty thousand supernatural slaves at least, suddenly there appeared a being in a white waistcoat, carrying under his arm a napkin, and attended by another being with an oblong box upon his head, from which a banquet, piping hot, was taken out and set upon the table.

Salmon, lamb, peas, innocent young potatoes, a cool salad, sliced cucumber, a tender duckling, and a tart — all there. They all came at the right time. Where they came from didn't appear; but the oblong box was constantly going and coming, and making its arrival known to the man in the white waistcoat by bumping modestly against the outside of the door: for, after its first appearance, it entered the room no more. He was never surprised, this man; he never seemed to wonder at the extraordinary things he found in the box; but took them out with a face expressive of a steady purpose and impenetrable character, and put them on the table. He was a kind man; gentle in his manners, and much interested in what they ate and drank. He was a learned man, and knew the flavour of John Westlock's sauces, which he softly and feelingly described, as he handed the little bottles round. He was a grave man, and a noiseless; for dinner being done, and wine and fruit arranged upon the board, he vanished, box and all, like something that had never been.

"Didn't I say he was a tremendous fellow in his housekeeping?" cried Tom. "Bless my soul! It's wonderful."

"Ah, Miss Pinch," said John. "This is the bright side of the life we lead in such a place. It would be a dismal life, indeed, if it did n't brighten up to-day."

"Don't believe a word he says," cried Tom. "He lives here like a monarch, and would n't change his mode of life for any consideration. He only pretends to grumble."

No, John really did not appear to pretend; for he was uncommonly earnest in his desire to have it understood that he was as dull, solitary, and uncomfortable on ordinary occasions as an unfortunate young man could, in reason, be. It was a wretched life, he said; a miserable life. He thought of getting rid of the chambers as soon as possible; and meant, in fact, to put a bill up very shortly.

"Well!" said Tom Pinch, "I don't know where you can go, John, to be more comfortable. That 's all I can say. What do *you* say, Ruth?"

Ruth trifled with the cherries on her plate, and said that she thought Mr. Westlock ought to be quite happy, and that she had no doubt he was.

Ah, foolish, panting, frightened little heart, how timidly she said it!

"But you are forgetting what you have to tell, Tom; what occurred this morning," she added in the same breath.

"So I am," said Tom. "We have been so talkative on other topics, that I declare I have not had time to think of it. I 'll tell it you at once, John, in case I should forget it altogether."

On Tom's relating what had passed upon the wharf, his friend was very much surprised, and took such a great interest in the narrative as Tom could not quite understand. He believed he knew the old lady whose acquaintance they had made, he said; and that he might venture to say, from their description of her, that her name was Gamp. But of what nature the communication could have been which Tom had borne so unexpectedly; why its delivery had been entrusted to him; how it happened that the parties were involved together, and what secret lay at the bottom of the whole affair, perplexed him very much. Tom had been sure of his taking some interest in the matter; but was not prepared for the strong interest he showed. It held John Westlock to the subject, even after Ruth had left the room; and evidently

made him anxious to pursue it further than as a mere subject of conversation.

"I shall remonstrate with my landlord, of course," said Tom; "though he is a very singular, secret sort of man, and not likely to afford me much satisfaction; even if he knew what was in the letter."

"Which you may swear he did," John interposed.

"You think so?"

"I am certain of it."

"Well!" said Tom, "I shall remonstrate with him when I see him (he goes in and out in a strange way, but I will try to catch him to-morrow morning), on his having asked me to execute such an unpleasant commission. And I have been thinking, John, that if I went down to Mrs. What's-her-name's in the City, where I was before, you know — Mrs. Todgers's — to-morrow morning, I might find poor Mercy Pecksniff there, perhaps, and be able to explain to her how I came to have any hand in the business."

"You are perfectly right, Tom," returned his friend, after a short interval of reflection. "You cannot do better. It is quite clear to me that, whatever the business is, there is little good in it; and it is so desirable for you to disentangle yourself from any appearance of wilful connection with it that I would counsel you to see her husband, if you can, and wash your hands of it, by a plain statement of the facts. I have a misgiving that there is something dark at work here, Tom. I will tell you why, at another time: when I have made an inquiry or two myself."

All this sounded very mysterious to Tom Pinch. But as he knew he could rely upon his friend, he resolved to follow this advice.

Ah, but it would have been a good thing to have had a coat of invisibility, wherein to have watched little Ruth, when she was left to herself in John Westlock's chambers, and John and her brother were talking thus, over their wine! The gentle way in which she tried to get up a little conversation with the fiery-faced matron in the crunched bonnet, who was waiting to attend her; after making a desperate rally in regard of her dress, and attiring herself in a washed-out yellow gown with sprigs of the same upon it, so that it looked like a tesselated work of pats of butter, — that would have been pleasant. The

grim and griffin-like inflexibility with which the fiery-faced matron repelled these engaging advances, as proceeding from a hostile and dangerous power, who could have no business there, unless it were to deprive her of a customer, or suggest what became of the self-consuming tea and sugar, and other general trifles,— that would have been agreeable. The bashful, winning, glorious curiosity, with which little Ruth, when fiery-face was gone, peeped into the books and nick-nacks that were lying about, and had a particular interest in some delicate paper matches on the chimney-piece, wondering who could have made them,— that would have been worth seeing. The faltering hand with which she tied those flowers together; with which, almost blushing at her own fair self as imaged in the glass, she arranged them in her breast, and, looking at them with her head aside, now half resolved to take them out again, now half resolved to leave them where they were,— that would have been delightful!

John seemed to think it all delightful; for coming in with Tom to tea, he took his seat beside her like a man enchanted. And when the tea-service had been removed, and Tom, sitting down at the piano, became absorbed in some of his old organ tunes, he was still beside her at the open window, looking out upon the twilight.

There is little enough to see, in Furnival's Inn. It is a shady, quiet place, echoing to the footsteps of the stragglers who have business there; and rather monotonous and gloomy on summer evenings. What gave it such a charm to them, that they remained at the window as unconscious of the flight of time as Tom himself, the dreamer, while the melodies which had so often soothed his spirit were hovering again about him! What power infused into the fading light, the gathering darkness, the stars that here and there appeared, the evening air, the City's hum and stir, the very chiming of the old church clocks, such exquisite enthralment that the divinest regions of the earth spread out before their eyes could not have held them captive in a stronger chain!

The shadows deepened, deepened, and the room became quite dark. Still Tom's fingers wandered over the keys of the piano; and still the window had its pair of tenants.

At length, her hand upon his shoulder, and her breath upon his forehead, roused Tom from his reverie.

"Dear me!" he cried, desisting with a start. "I am afraid I have been very inconsiderate and unpolite."

Tom little thought how much consideration and politeness he had shown!

"Sing something to us, my dear," said Tom. "Let us hear your voice. Come!"

John Westlock added his entreaties, with such earnestness that a flinty heart alone could have resisted them. Hers was not a flinty heart; oh, dear, no! quite another thing.

So down she sat, and in a pleasant voice began to sing the ballads Tom loved well. Old rhyming stories, with here and there a pause for a few simple chords, such as a harper might have sounded in the ancient time while looking upward for the current of some half-remembered legend; words of old poets wedded to such measures that the strain of music might have been the poet's breath, giving utterance and expression to his thoughts; and now a melody so joyous and light-hearted that the singer seemed incapable of sadness, until in her inconstancy (oh, wicked little singer!) she relapsed, and broke the listeners' hearts again: these were the simple means she used to please them. And that these simple means prevailed, and she *did* please them, let the still darkened chamber, and its long-deferred illumination witness!

The candles came at last, and it was time for moving homeward. Cutting paper carefully, and rolling it about the stalks of those same flowers, occasioned some delay; but even this was done in time, and Ruth was ready.

"Good night!" said Tom. "A memorable and delightful visit, John! Good night!"

John thought he would walk with them.

"No, no. Don't!" said Tom. "What nonsense! We can get home very well alone. I could n't think of taking you out."

But John said he would rather.

"Are you sure you would rather?" said Tom. "I am afraid you only say so out of politeness."

John being quite sure gave his arm to Ruth, and led her out. Fiery-face, who was again in attendance, acknowledged her departure with so cold a curtsey that it was hardly visible; and cut Tom, dead.

Their host was bent on walking the whole distance, and

would not listen to Tom's dissuasions. Happy time, happy walk, happy parting, happy dreams! But there are some sweet day-dreams, so there are, that put the visions of the night to shame.

Busily the Temple fountain murmured in the moonlight, while Ruth lay sleeping, with her flowers beside her; and John Westlock sketched a portrait — whose? — from memory.

CHAPTER XLVI

IN WHICH MISS PECKSNIFF MAKES LOVE, MR. JONAS MAKES WRATH, MRS. GAMP MAKES TEA, AND MR. CHUFFEY MAKES BUSINESS.

On the next day's official duties coming to a close, Tom hurried home without losing any time by the way; and after dinner and a short rest, sallied out again, accompanied by Ruth, to pay his projected visit to Todgers's. Tom took Ruth with him, not only because it was a great pleasure to him to have her for his companion whenever he could, but because he wished her to cherish and comfort poor Merry; which she, for her own part (having heard the wretched history of that young wife from Tom), was all eagerness to do.

"She was so glad to see me," said Tom, "that I am sure she will be glad to see you. Your sympathy is certain to be much more delicate and acceptable than mine."

"I am very far from being certain of that, Tom," she replied; "and indeed you do yourself an injustice. Indeed you do. But I hope she may like me, Tom."

"Oh, she is sure to do that!" cried Tom confidently.

"What a number of friends I should have, if everybody was of your way of thinking. Should n't I, Tom, dear?" said his little sister, pinching him upon the cheek.

Tom laughed, and said that with reference to this particular case he had no doubt at all of finding a disciple in Merry. "For you women," said Tom, "you women, my dear, are so kind, and in your kindness have such nice perception; you know so well how to be affectionate and full of solicitude without appearing to be; your gentleness of feeling is like your touch, so light and easy, that the one enables you to deal with wounds of the mind as tenderly as the other enables you to deal with wounds of the body. You are such —"

"My goodness, Tom!" his sister interposed. "You ought to fall in love immediately."

Tom put this observation off good-humouredly, but some-

what gravely too; and they were soon very chatty again on some other subject.

As they were passing through a street in the City, not very far from Mrs. Todgers's place of residence, Ruth checked Tom before the window of a large Upholstery and Furniture Warehouse, to call his attention to something very magnificent and ingenious, displayed there to the best advantage, for the admiration and temptation of the public. Tom had hazarded some most erroneous and extravagantly wrong guess in relation to the price of this article, and had joined his sister in laughing heartily at his mistake, when he pressed her arm in his, and pointed to two persons at a little distance, who were looking in at the same window with a deep interest in the chests of drawers and tables.

"Hush!" Tom whispered. "Miss Pecksniff, and the young gentleman to whom she is going to be married."

"Why does he look as if he was going to be buried, Tom?" inquired his little sister.

"Why, he is naturally a dismal young gentleman, I believe," said Tom; "but he is very civil and inoffensive."

"I suppose they are furnishing their house," whispered Ruth.

"Yes, I suppose they are," replied Tom. "We had better avoid speaking to them."

They could not very well avoid looking at them, however, especially as some obstruction on the pavement, at a little distance, happened to detain them where they were for a few moments. Miss Pecksniff had quite the air of having taken the unhappy Moddle captive, and brought him up to the contemplation of the furniture like a lamb to the altar. He offered no resistance, but was perfectly resigned and quiet. The melancholy depicted in the turn of his languishing head, and in his dejected attitude, was extreme; and though there was a full-sized four-post bedstead in the window, such a tear stood trembling in his eye as seemed to blot it out.

"Augustus, my love," said Miss Pecksniff, "ask the price of the eight rosewood chairs, and the loo table."

"Perhaps they are ordered already," said Augustus. "Perhaps they are Another's."

"They can make more like them, if they are," rejoined Miss Pecksniff.

"No, no, they can't," said Moddle. "It 's impossible!"

He appeared, for the moment, to be quite overwhelmed and stupefied by the prospect of his approaching happiness; but recovering, entered the shop. He returned immediately, saying in a tone of despair: —

"Twenty-four pound ten!"

Miss Pecksniff, turning to receive this announcement, became conscious of the observation of Tom Pinch and his sister.

"Oh, really!" cried Miss Pecksniff, glancing about her, as if for some convenient means of sinking into the earth. "Upon my word, I — there never was such a — to think that one should be so very — Mr. Augustus Moddle, Miss Pinch!"

Miss Pecksniff was quite gracious to Miss Pinch in this triumphant introduction; exceedingly gracious. She was more than gracious: she was kind and cordial. Whether the recollection of the old service Tom had rendered her in knocking Mr. Jonas on the head had wrought this change in her opinions; or whether her separation from her parent had reconciled her to all human-kind, or to all that increasing portion of human-kind which was not friendly to him; or whether the delight of having some new female acquaintance to whom to communicate her interesting prospects, was paramount to every other consideration, cordial and kind Miss Pecksniff was. And twice Miss Pecksniff kissed Miss Pinch upon the cheek.

"Augustus — Mr. Pinch, you know. My dear girl!" said Miss Pecksniff, aside. "I never was so ashamed in my life."

Ruth begged her not to think of it.

"I mind your brother less than anybody else," simpered Miss Pecksniff. "But the indelicacy of meeting any gentleman under such circumstances! Augustus, my child, did you — "

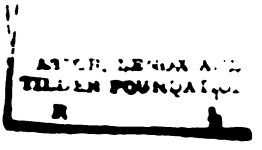
Here Miss Pecksniff whispered in his ear. The suffering Moddle repeated: —

"Twenty-four pound ten!"

"Oh, you silly man! I don't mean them," said Miss Pecksniff. "I am speaking of the — "

Here she whispered him again.

"If it 's the same patterned chintz as that in the window, thirty-two, twelve, six," said Moddle, with a sigh; "and very dear."



Miss Pecksniff stopped him from giving any further explanation by laying her hand upon his lips, and betraying a soft embarrassment. She then asked Tom Pinch which way he was going.

"I was going to see if I could find your sister," answered Tom, "to whom I wished to say a few words. We were going to Mrs. Todgers's, where I had the pleasure of seeing her before."

"It 's of no use your going on, then," said Cherry, "for we have not long left there; and I know she is not at home. But I 'll take you to my sister's house, if you please. Augustus — Mr. Moddle, I mean — and myself are on our way to tea there, now. You need n't think of *him*," she added, nodding her head, as she observed some hesitation on Tom's part. "He is not at home."

"Are you sure?" asked Tom.

"Oh, I am quite sure of that. I don't want any *more* revenge," said Miss Pecksniff expressively. "But, really, I must beg you two gentlemen to walk on, and allow me to follow with Miss Pinch. My dear, I never was so taken by surprise!"

In furtherance of this bashful arrangement, Moddle gave his arm to Tom; and Miss Pecksniff linked her own in Ruth's.

"Of course, my love," said Miss Pecksniff, "it would be useless for me to disguise, after what you have seen, that I am about to be united to the gentleman who is walking with your brother. It would be in vain to conceal it. What do you think of him? Pray, let me have your candid opinion."

Ruth intimated that, as far as she could judge, he was a very eligible swain.

"I am curious to know," said Miss Pecksniff, with loquacious frankness, "whether you have observed, or fancied, in this very short space of time, that he is of a rather melancholy turn?"

"So very short a time," Ruth pleaded.

"No, no; but don't let that interfere with your answer," returned Miss Pecksniff. "I am curious to hear what you say."

Ruth acknowledged that he had impressed her at first sight as looking "rather low."

"No, really?" said Miss Pecksniff. "Well! that is quite

remarkable! Everybody says the same. Mrs. Todgers says the same; and Augustus informs me that it is quite a joke among the gentlemen in the house. Indeed, but for the positive commands I have laid upon him, I believe it would have been the occasion of loaded fire-arms being resorted to more than once. What do you think is the cause of his appearance of depression?"

Ruth thought of several things: such as his digestion, his tailor, his mother, and the like. But hesitating to give utterance to any one of them, she refrained from expressing an opinion.

"My dear," said Miss Pecksniff; "I should n't wish it to be known, but I don't mind mentioning it to you, having known your brother for so many years — I refused Augustus three times. He is of a most amiable and sensitive nature; always ready to shed tears, if you look at him, which is extremely charming; and he has never recovered the effect of that cruelty. For it *was* cruel," said Miss Pecksniff, with a self-convicting candour that might have adorned the diadem of her own papa. "There is no doubt of it. I look back upon my conduct now with blushes. I always liked him. I felt that he was not to me what the crowd of young men who had made proposals had been, but something very different. Then what right had I to refuse him three times?"

"It was a severe trial of his fidelity, no doubt," said Ruth.

"My dear," returned Miss Pecksniff, "it was wrong. But such is the caprice and thoughtlessness of our sex! Let me be a warning to you. Don't try the feelings of any one who makes you an offer, as I have tried the feelings of Augustus; but if you ever feel towards a person as I really felt towards him, at the very time when I was driving him to distraction, let that feeling find expression, if that person throws himself at your feet, as Augustus Moddle did at mine. Think," said Miss Pecksniff, "what my feelings would have been, if I had goaded him to suicide, and it had got into the papers!"

Ruth observed that she would have been full of remorse, no doubt.

"Remorse!" cried Miss Pecksniff, in a sort of snug and comfortable penitence. "What my remorse is at this moment, even after making reparation by accepting him, it would be impossible to tell you! Looking back upon my giddy self, my

dear, now that I am sobered down and made thoughtful by treading on the very brink of matrimony, and contemplating myself as I was when I was like what you are now, I shudder, — I shudder. What is the consequence of my past conduct? Until Augustus leads me to the altar, he is not sure of me. I have blighted and withered the affections of his heart to that extent that he is not sure of me. I see that preying on his mind and feeding on his vitals. What are the reproaches of my conscience, when I see this in the man I love!"

Ruth endeavoured to express some sense of her unbounded and flattering confidence; and presumed that she was going to be married soon.

"Very soon, indeed," returned Miss Pecksniff. "As soon as our house is ready. We are furnishing now as fast as we can."

In the same vein of confidence, Miss Pecksniff ran through a general inventory of the articles that were already bought, with the articles that remained to be purchased; what garments she intended to be married in, and where the ceremony was to be performed; and gave Miss Pinch, in short (as she told her), early and exclusive information on all points of interest connected with the event.

While this was going forward in the rear, Tom and Mr. Moddle walked on, arm in arm, in the front, in a state of profound silence, which Tom at last broke; after thinking for a long time what he could say that should refer to an indifferent topic, in respect of which he might rely, with some degree of certainty, on Mr. Moddle's bosom being unruffled.

"I wonder," said Tom, "that in these crowded streets, the foot-passengers are not oftener run over."

Mr. Moddle, with a dark look, replied: —

"The drivers won't do it."

"Do you mean —" Tom began.

"That there are some men," interrupted Moddle, with a hollow laugh, "who can't get run over. They live a charmed life. Coal wagons recoil from them, and even cabs refuse to run them down. Ay!" said Augustus, marking Tom's astonishment; "there are such men. One of 'em is a friend of mine."

"Upon my word and honour," thought Tom, "this young gentleman is in a state of mind which is very serious, indeed!" Abandoning all idea of conversation, he did not venture to say

another word; but he was careful to keep a tight hold upon Augustus's arm, lest he should fly into the road, and making another, and a more successful attempt, should get up a private little Juggernaut before the eyes of his betrothed. Tom was so afraid of his committing this rash act that he had scarcely ever experienced such mental relief as when they arrived in safety at Mrs. Jonas Chuzzlewit's house.

"Walk up, pray, Mr. Pinch," said Miss Pecksniff. For Tom halted, irresolutely, at the door.

"I am doubtful whether I should be welcome," replied Tom; "or, I ought rather to say, I have no doubt about it. I will send up a message, I think."

"But what nonsense that is!" returned Miss Pecksniff, speaking apart to Tom. "He is not at home, I am certain; I know he is not; and Merry has n't the least idea that you ever —"

"No," interrupted Tom; "nor would I have her know it, on any account. I am not so proud of that scuffle, I assure you."

"Ah, but then you are so modest, you see," returned Miss Pecksniff, with a smile. "But pray walk up. If you don't wish her to know it, and do wish to speak to her, pray walk up. Pray walk up, Miss Pinch. Don't stand here."

Tom still hesitated; for he felt that he was in an awkward position. But Cherry passing him at this juncture, and leading his sister up stairs, and the house door being at the same time shut behind them, he followed without quite knowing whether it was well or ill judged so to do.

"Merry, my darling!" said the fair Miss Pecksniff, opening the door of the usual sitting-room. "Here are Mr. Pinch and his sister come to see you! I thought we should find you here, Mrs. Todgers! How do you do, Mrs. Gamp? And how do you do, Mr. Chuffey, though it 's of no use asking you the question, I am well aware."

Honouring each of these parties, as she severally addressed them, with an acid smile, Miss Charity presented Mr. Moddle.

"I believe you have seen *him* before," she pleasantly observed. "Augustus, my sweet child, bring me a chair."

The sweet child did as he was told; and was then about to retire into a corner to mourn in secret, when Miss Charity, calling him in an audible whisper a "little pet," gave him leave to come and sit beside her. It is to be hoped, for the general

cheerfulness of mankind, that such a doleful little pet was never seen as Mr. Moddle looked when he complied. So despondent was his temper that he showed no outward thrill of ecstasy, when Miss Pecksniff placed her lily hand in his, and concealed this mark of her favour from the vulgar gaze by covering it with a corner of her shawl. Indeed, he was infinitely more rueful then than he had been before; and sitting uncomfortably upright in his chair, surveyed the company with watery eyes, which seemed to say, without the aid of language, "Oh, good gracious! look here! Won't some kind Christian help me!"

But the ecstasies of Mrs. Gamp were sufficient to have furnished forth a score of young lovers; and they were chiefly awakened by the sight of Tom Pinch and his sister. Mrs. Gamp was a lady of that happy temperament which can be ecstatic without any other stimulating cause than a general desire to establish a large and profitable connection. She added daily so many strings to her bow that she made a perfect harp of it; and upon that instrument she now began to perform an extemporaneous concerto.

"Why, goodness me!" she said, "Mrs. Chuzzlewit! To think as I should see beneath this blessed 'ouse, which well I know it, Miss Pecksniff, my sweet young lady, to be a 'ouse as there is not a many like, worse luck and wishin' it ware not so, which then this tearful walley would be changed into a flowerin' guardian, Mr. Chuffey,—to think as I should see beneath this indiwidgle roof, identically comin', Mr. Pinch (I take the liberty, though almost unbeknown), and do assure you of it, sir, the smilinest and sweetest face as ever, Mrs. Chuzzlewit, I see, exceptin' yourn, my dear good lady, and *your* good lady's too, sir, Mr. Moddle, if I may make so bold as speak so plain of what is plain enough to them as need n't look through millstones, Mrs. Todgers, to find out wot is wrote upon the wall behind,—which no offence is meant, ladies and gentlemen; none bein' took, I hope,—to think as I should see that smilinest and sweetest face which me and another friend of mine, took notige of among the packages down London Bridge, in this promiscous place, is a surprige in-deed!"

Having contrived, in this happy manner, to invest every member of her audience with an individual share and immediate personal interest in her address, Mrs. Gamp dropped several

curtseys to Ruth, and, smilingly shaking her head a great many times, pursued the thread of her discourse: —

"Now, ain't we rich in beauty this here joyful artern. I 'm sure! I knows a lady, which her name, I 'll not tell you, Mrs. Chuzzlewit, is Harris, her husband's brother is six foot three, and marked with a mad bull in Wellington's time upon his left arm, on account of his precious mother-in-law having been worrited by one into a shoemaker's shop, when in a agitation which blessed is the man as has his quiver full. So as many times I 've said to Gamp when words has rose betwixt us on account of the expense — and often have I said to Mrs. Harris, 'Oh, Mrs. Harris, ma'am! your countenance is quite angel's!' — which, but for Pimples, it would be, — 'Yes, Mrs. Gamp,' says she, 'you best of hard-working and most ill-used creeturs as ever was underpaid at any price, which that you are, quite diff'rent. Harris had it done afore marriage, ten and six,' she says, 'and wore it faithful next his heart till the colour run, when the money was declined to be give back, and no arrangement could be come to. But he never said he was a angel's, Sarey, wotever he might have thought.' Mrs. Harris's husband was here now," said Mrs. Gamp, looking round, and chuckling as she dropped a general curtsey, "to speak out plain, he would, and his dear wife would be the last to blame him! For if ever a woman lived as knowed how to form a wish to pizon them as had good looks, and no reagon give her by the best of husbands, Mrs. Harris is ev'nly dispegician!"

With these words the worthy woman, who appeared to have dropped in to take tea as a delicate little attention, rather than to have any engagement on the premises in an official capacity, crossed to Mr. Chuffey, who was seated in the same corner of old, and shook him by the shoulder.

"Rouge yourself and look up! Come!" said Mrs. Gamp. "Here 's company, Mr. Chuffey."

"I am sorry for it," cried the old man, looking hastily round the room. "I know I 'm in the way. I ask pardon, but I 've nowhere else to go to. Where is she?"

Merry went to him.

"Ah!" said the old man, patting her on the cheek. "Here she is. Here she is! She 's never hard on poor old Chuff. Poor old Chuff!"

As she took her seat upon a low chair by the old man's side, and put herself within the reach of his hand, she looked up once at Tom. It was a sad look that she cast upon him, though there was a faint smile trembling on her face. It was a speaking look, and Tom knew what it said. "You see how misery has changed me. I can feel for a dependent *now*, and set some value on his attachment."

"Ay, ay!" cried Chuffey in a soothing tone. "Ay, ay, ay! Never mind him. It 's hard to bear, but never mind him. He 'll die one day. There are three hundred and sixty-five days in the year — three hundred and sixty-six in leap year — and he may die on any one of 'em."

"You 're a wearing old soul, and that 's the sacred truth," said Mrs. Gamp, contemplating him from a little distance with anything but favour, as he continued to mutter to himself. "It 's a pity that you don't know wot you say, for you 'd tire your own patience out if you did, and fret yourself into a happy releage for all as knows you."

"His son," murmured the old man lifting up his hand. "His son!"

"Well, I 'm sure!" said Mrs. Gamp, "you 're a settlin' of it, Mr. Chuffey. To your satigefaction, sir, I hope. But I wouldn't lay a new pincushion on it myself, sir, though you *are* so well informed. Drat the old creetur, he 's a layin' down the law tolerable confident, too! A deal he knows of sons! or darters either! Suppose you was to favour us with some remarks on twins, sir, *would* you be so good!"

The bitter and indignant sarcasm which Mrs. Gamp conveyed into these taunts was altogether lost on the unconscious Chuffey, who appeared to be as little cognisant of their delivery as of his having given Mrs. Gamp offence. But that high-minded woman, being sensitively alive to any invasion of her professional province, and imagining that Mr. Chuffey had given utterance to some prediction on the subject of sons, which ought to have emanated in the first instance from herself as the only lawful authority, or which should at least have been on no account proclaimed without her sanction and concurrence, was not so easily appeased. She continued to sidle at Mr. Chuffey with looks of sharp hostility, and to defy him with many other ironical remarks, uttered in that low key which commonly denotes suppressed indignation, until the

entrance of the tea-board, and a request from Mrs. Jonas that she would make tea at a side-table for the party that had unexpectedly assembled, restored her to herself. She smiled, again, and entered on her ministration with her own particular urbanity.

"And quite a family it is to make tea for," said Mrs. Gamp; "and wot a happiness to do it! My good young 'ooman"— to the servant-girl — "p'raps somebody would like to try a new-laid egg or two, not biled too hard. Likeways, a few rounds o' buttered toast, first cuttin' off the crust, in consequence of tender teeth, and not too many of 'em; which Gamp himself, Mrs. Chuzzlewit, at one blow, being in liquor, struck out four, two single, and two double, as was took by Mrs. Harris for a keepsake, and is carried in her pocket at this present hour, along with two cramp-bones, a bit o' ginger, and a grater like a blessed infant's shoe, in tin, with a little heel to put the nutmeg in: as many times I 've seen and said, and used for caudle when required, within the month."

As the privileges of the side-table — besides including the small prerogatives of sitting next the toast, and taking two cups of tea to other people's one, and always taking them at a crisis, that is to say, before putting fresh water into the teapot, and after it had been standing for some time — also comprehended a full view of the company, and an opportunity of addressing them as from a rostrum, Mrs. Gamp discharged the functions intrusted to her with extreme good-humour and affability. Sometimes, resting her saucer on the palm of her outspread hand, and supporting her elbow on the table, she stopped between her sips of tea to favour the circle with a smile, a wink, a roll of the head, or some other mark of notice, and at those periods, her countenance was lighted up with a degree of intelligence and vivacity, which it was almost impossible to separate from the benignant influence of distilled waters.

But for Mrs. Gamp, it would have been a curiously silent party. Miss Pecksniff only spoke to her Augustus, and to him in whispers. Augustus spoke to nobody, but sighed for every one, and occasionally gave himself such a sounding slap upon the forehead as would make Mrs. Todgers, who was rather nervous, start in her chair with an involuntary exclamation. Mrs. Todgers was occupied in knitting, and seldom spoke.

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Poor Merry held the hand of cheerful little Ruth between her own, and listening with evident pleasure to all she said, but rarely speaking herself, sometimes smiled, and sometimes kissed her on the cheek, and sometimes turned aside to hide the tears that trembled in her eyes. Tom felt this change in her so much, and was so glad to see how tenderly Ruth dealt with her, and how she knew and answered to it, that he had not the heart to make any movement towards their departure, although he had long since given utterance to all he came to say.

The old clerk, subsiding into his usual state, remained profoundly silent, while the rest of the little assembly were thus occupied, intent upon the dreams, whatever they might be, which hardly seemed to stir the surface of his sluggish thoughts. The bent of these dull fancies combining probably with the silent feasting that was going on about him, and some struggling recollection of the last approach to revelry he had witnessed, suggested a strange question to his mind. He looked round upon a sudden, and said: —

"Who 's lying dead up stairs?"

"No one," said Merry, turning to him. "What is the matter? We are all here."

"All here!" cried the old man; "all here! Where is he then — my old master, Mr. Chuzzlewit, who had the only son? Where is he?"

"Hush! Hush!" said Merry, speaking kindly to him. "That happened long ago. Don't you recollect?"

"Recollect!" rejoined the old man, with a cry of grief. "As if I could forget! As if I ever could forget!"

He put his hand up to his face for a moment; and then repeated, turning round exactly as before: —

"Who 's lying dead up stairs?"

"No one!" said Merry.

At first he gazed angrily upon her, as upon a stranger who endeavoured to deceive him; but peering into her face, and seeing that it was indeed she, he shook his head in sorrowful compassion.

"You think not. But they don't tell you. No, no, poor thing! They don't tell you. Who are these, and why are they merry-making here, if there is no one dead? Foul play! Go see who it is!"

She made a sign to them not to speak to him, which indeed

they had little inclination to do; and remained silent herself. So did he for a short time; but then he repeated the same question with an eagerness that had a peculiar terror in it.

"There 's some one dead," he said, "or dying; and I want to know who it is. Go see, go see! Where 's Jonas?"

"In the country," she replied.

The old man gazed at her as if he doubted what she said, or had not heard her; and, rising from his chair, walked across the room and up stairs, whispering as he went, "Foul play!" They heard his footsteps over-head, going up into that corner of the room in which the bed stood (it was there old Anthony had died); and then they heard him coming down again immediately. His fancy was not so strong or wild that it pictured to him anything in the deserted bed-chamber which was not there; for he returned much calmer, and appeared to have satisfied himself.

"They don't tell you," he said to Merry in his quavering voice, as he sat down again, and patted her upon the head. "They don't tell me either; but I 'll watch, I 'll watch. They shall not hurt you; don't be frightened. When you have sat up watching, I have sat up watching, too. Ay, ay, I have!" he piped out, clenching his weak, shrivelled hand. "Many a night I have been ready!"

He said this with such trembling gaps and pauses in his want of breath, and said it in his jealous secrecy so closely in her ear, that little or nothing of it was understood by the visitors. But they had heard and seen enough of the old man to be disquieted, and to have left their seats and gathered about him; thereby affording Mrs. Gamp, whose professional coolness was not so easily disturbed, an eligible opportunity for concentrating the whole resources of her powerful mind and appetite upon the toast and butter, tea and eggs. She had brought them to bear upon those viands with such vigour that her face was in the highest state of inflammation, when she now (there being nothing left to eat or drink) saw fit to interpose.

"Why, highty tighty, sir!" cried Mrs. Gamp, "is these your manners? You want a pitcher of cold water throwed over you to bring you round; that 's my belief; and if you was under Betsey Prig you 'd have it, too, I do assure you, Mr. Chuffey. Spanish Flies is the only thing to draw this nonsense out of you; and if anybody wanted to do you a kindness,

they 'd clap a blister of 'em on your head, and put a mustard poultige on your back. Who 's dead, indeed! It would n't be no grievous loss if some one was, I think!"

"He 's quiet now, Mrs. Gamp," said Merry. "Don't disturb him."

"Oh, bother the old wictim, Mrs. Chuzzlewit," replied that zealous lady, "I ain't no patience with him. You give him his own way too much by half. A worritin', wexagious creetur!"

No doubt with the view of carrying out the precepts she enforced, and "bothering the old victim" in practice as well as in theory, Mrs. Gamp took him by the collar of his coat, and gave him some dozen or two of hearty shakes backward and forward in his chair; that exercise being considered by the disciples of the Prig school of nursing (who are very numerous among professional ladies) as exceedingly conducive to repose, and highly beneficial to the performance of the nervous functions. Its effect in this instance was to render the patient so giddy and addle-headed that he could say nothing more; which Mrs. Gamp regarded as the triumph of her art.

"There!" she said, loosening the old man's cravat, in consequence of his being rather black in the face, after this scientific treatment. "Now, I hope, you 're easy in your mind. If you should turn at all faint, we can soon rewive you, sir, I promige you. Bite a person's thumbs, or turn their fingers the wrong way," said Mrs. Gamp, smiling with the consciousness of at once imparting pleasure and instruction to her auditors, "and they comes to wonderful, Lord bless you!"

As this excellent woman had been formally intrusted with the care of Mr. Chuffey on a previous occasion, neither Mrs. Jonas nor anybody else had the resolution to interfere directly with her mode of treatment; though all present (Tom Pinch and his sister especially) appeared to be disposed to differ from her views. For such is the rash boldness of the uninitiated that they will frequently set up some monstrous abstract principle, such as humanity, or tenderness, or the like idle folly, in obstinate defiance of all precedent and usage; and will even venture to maintain the same against the persons who have made the precedents and established the usage, and who must therefore be the best and most impartial judges of the subject.

"Ah, Mr. Pinch!" said Miss Pecksniff. "It all comes of this unfortunate marriage. If my sister had not been so pre-

cipitate, and had not united herself to a Wretch, there would have been no Mr. Chuffey in the house."

"Hush!" cried Tom. "She 'll hear you."

"I should be very sorry if she did hear me, Mr. Pinch," said Cherry, raising her voice a little; "for it is not in my nature to add to the uneasiness of any person, far less of my own sister. *I* know what a sister's duties are, Mr. Pinch, and I hope I always showed it in my practice. Augustus, my dear child, find my pocket-handkerchief, and give it to me."

Augustus obeyed, and took Mrs. Todgers aside to pour his griefs into her friendly bosom.

"I am sure, Mr. Pinch," said Charity, looking after her betrothed and glancing at her sister, "that I ought to be very grateful for the blessings I enjoy, and those which are yet in store for me. When I contrast Augustus" — here she was modest and embarrassed — "who, I don't mind saying to you, is all softness, mildness, and devotion, with the detestable man who is my sister's husband; and when I think, Mr. Pinch, that in the dispensations of this world, our cases might have been reversed, I have much to be thankful for, indeed, and much to make me humble and contented."

Contented she might have been, but humble she assuredly was not. Her face and manner experienced something so widely different from humility that Tom could not help understanding and despising the base motives that were working in her breast. He turned away, and said to Ruth that it was time for them to go.

"I will write to your husband," said Tom to Merry, "and explain to him, as I would have done if I had met him here, that, if he has sustained any inconvenience through my means, it is not my fault: a postman not being more innocent of the news he brings than I was when I handed him that letter."

"I thank you!" said Merry. "It may do some good."

She parted tenderly from Ruth, who with her brother was in the act of leaving the room, when a key was heard in the lock of the door below, and immediately afterwards a quick footstep in the passage. Tom stopped, and looked at Merry.

It was Jonas, she said timidly.

"I had better not meet him on the stairs, perhaps," said Tom, drawing his sister's arm through his, and coming back a step or two. "I 'll wait for him here, a moment."

He had scarcely said it, when the door opened, and Jonas entered. His wife came forward to receive him; but he put her aside with his hand, and said in a surly tone: —

"I did n't know you 'd got a party."

As he looked, at the same time, either by accident or design, towards Miss Pecksniff, and as Miss Pecksniff was only too delighted to quarrel with him, she instantly resented it.

"Oh, dear!" she said rising. "Pray don't let us intrude upon your domestic happiness! That would be a pity. We have taken tea here, sir, in your absence; but if you will have the goodness to send us a note of the expense, receipted, we shall be happy to pay it. Augustus, my love, we will go, if you please. Mrs. Todgers, unless you wish to remain here, we shall be happy to take you with us. It would be a pity, indeed, to spoil the bliss which this gentleman always brings with him: especially into his own home."

"Charity! Charity!" remonstrated her sister, in such a heartfelt tone that she might have been imploring her to show the cardinal virtue whose name she bore.

"Merry, my dear, I am much obliged to you for your advice," returned Miss Pecksniff, with a stately scorn — by the way, she had not been offered any — "but *I* am not his slave — "

"No, nor would n't have been if you could," interrupted Jonas. "We know all about it."

"*What* did you say, sir?" cried Miss Pecksniff sharply.

"Did n't you hear?" retorted Jonas, lounging down upon a chair. "I am not a going to say it again. If you like to stay, you may stay. If you like to go, you may go. But if you stay, please to be civil."

"Beast!" cried Miss Pecksniff, sweeping past him. "Augustus! He is beneath your notice!" Augustus had been making some faint and sickly demonstration of shaking his fist. "Come away, child," screamed Miss Pecksniff, "I command you!"

The scream was elicited from her by Augustus manifesting an intention to return and grapple with him. But Miss Pecksniff giving the fiery youth a pull, and Mrs. Todgers giving him a push, they all three tumbled out of the room together, to the music of Miss Pecksniff's shrill remonstrances.

All this time, Jonas had seen nothing of Tom and his sister;

for they were almost behind the door when he opened it, and he had sat down with his back towards them, and had purposely kept his eyes upon the opposite side of the street during his altercation with Miss Pecksniff, in order that his seeming carelessness might increase the exasperation of that wronged young damsel. His wife now faltered out that Tom had been waiting to see him; and Tom advanced.

The instant he presented himself, Jonas got up from his chair, and, swearing a great oath, caught it in his grasp, as if he would have felled Tom to the ground with it; as he most unquestionably would have done, but that his very passion and surprise made him irresolute, and gave Tom, in his calmness, an opportunity of being heard.

"You have no cause to be violent, sir," said Tom. "Though what I wish to say relates to your own affairs, I know nothing of them, and desire to know nothing of them."

Jonas was too enraged to speak. He held the door open; and stamping his foot upon the ground, motioned Tom away.

"As you cannot suppose," said Tom, "that I am here with any view of conciliating you or pleasing myself, I am quite indifferent to your reception of me, or your dismissal of me. Hear what I have to say, if you are not a madman! I gave you a letter the other day, when you were about to go abroad."

"You Thief, you did!" retorted Jonas. "I 'll pay you for the carriage of it one day, and settle an old score besides. I will."

"Tut, tut," said Tom; "you need n't waste words or threats. I wish you to understand — plainly because I would rather keep clear of you and everything that concerns you; not because I have the least apprehension of your doing me any injury; which would be weak indeed — that I am no party to the contents of that letter; that I know nothing of it; that I was not even aware that it was to be delivered to you; and that I had it from —"

"By the Lord!" cried Jonas, fiercely catching up the chair, "I 'll knock your brains out, if you speak another word."

Tom, nevertheless, persisting in his intention, and opening his lips to speak again, Jonas set upon him like a savage; and in the quickness and ferocity of his attack would have surely done him some grievous injury, defenceless as he was, and embarrassed by having his frightened sister clinging to his arm,

f Merry had not run between them, crying to Tom for the ve of Heaven to leave the house. The agony of this poor ature, the terror of his sister, the impossibility of making mself audible, and the equal impossibility of bearing up inst Mrs. Gamp, who threw herself upon him like a feather-d, and forced him backwards down the stairs by the mere pression of her dead-weight, prevailed. Tom shook the dust f that house off his feet, without having mentioned Nadgett's me.

If the name could have passed his lips; if Jonas, in the lence of his vile nature, had never roused him to do that act of manliness, for which (and not for his last offence) hated him with such malignity; if Jonas could have learned, then he could and would have learned, through Tom's ans, what unsuspected spy there was upon him, he would ve been saved from the commission of a Guilty Deed, then wing on towards its black accomplishment. But the fatality s of his own working; the pit was of his own digging; the m that gathered round him was the shadow of his own f.

His wife had closed the door, and thrown herself before it, the ground, upon her knees. She held up her hands to m now, and besought him not to be harsh with her, for she d interposed in fear of bloodshed.

"So, so!" said Jonas, looking down upon her, as he fetched s breath. "These are your friends, are they, when I am way? You plot and tamper with this sort of people, do you?"

"No, indeed! I have no knowledge of these secrets, and no clue to their meaning. I have never seen him since I left home but once — but twice — before to-day."

"Oh!" sneered Jonas, catching at this correction. "But ce, but twice, eh? Which do you mean? Twice and once, perhaps. Three times! How many more, you lying jade?"

As he made an angry motion with his hand, she shrunk wn hastily, — a suggestive action; full of a cruel truth!

"How many more times?" he repeated.

"No more. The other morning, and to-day, and once sides."

He was about to retort upon her, when the clock struck. He started, stopped, and listened; appearing to revert to some

engagement, or to some other subject, a secret within his own breast, recalled to him by this record of the progress of the hours.

"Don't lie there. Get up!"

Having helped her to rise, or rather hauled her up by the arm, he went on to say: —

"Listen to me, young lady; and don't whine when you have no occasion, or I may make some for you. If I find him in my house again, or find that you have seen him in anybody else's house, you 'll repent it. If you are not deaf and dumb to everything that concerns me, unless you have my leave to hear and speak, you 'll repent it. If you don't obey exactly what I order, you 'll repent it. Now, attend. What 's the time?"

"It struck Eight a minute ago."

He looked towards her intently; and said, with a laboured distinctness, as if he had got the words off by heart: —

"I have been travelling day and night, and am tired. I have lost some money, and that don't improve me. Put my supper in the little off-room below, and have the truckle-bed made. I shall sleep there to-night, and maybe to-morrow night; and if I can sleep all day to-morrow, so much the better, for I 've got trouble to sleep off, if I can. Keep the house quiet, and don't call me. Mind! Don't call me. Don't let anybody call me. Let me lie there."

She said it should be done. Was that all?

"What! you must be prying and questioning?" he angrily retorted. "What more do you want to know?"

"I want to know nothing, Jonas, but what you tell me. All hope of confidence between us has long deserted me."

"Ecod, I should hope so!" he muttered.

"But if you will tell me what you wish, I will be obedient and will try to please you. I make no merit of that, for I have no friend in my father or my sister, but am quite alone. I am very humble and submissive. You told me you would break my spirit, and you have done so. Do not break my heart, too!"

She ventured, as she said these words, to lay her hand upon his shoulder. He suffered it to rest there, in his exultation; and the whole mean, abject, sordid, pitiful soul of the man looked at her, for the moment, through his wicked eyes.

For the moment only: for with the same hurried return to something within himself, he bade her, in a surly tone, show her obedience by executing his commands without delay. When she had withdrawn, he paced up and down the room several times; but always with his right hand clenched, as if it held something, which it did not, being empty. When he was tired of this, he threw himself into a chair, and thoughtfully turned up the sleeve of his right arm, as if he were rather musing about its strength than examining it; but even then he kept the hand clenched.

He was brooding in this chair, with his eyes cast down upon the ground, when Mrs. Gamp came in to tell him that the little room was ready. Not being quite sure of her reception after interfering in the quarrel, Mrs. Gamp, as a means of interesting and propitiating her patron, affected a deep solicitude in Mr. Chuffey.

"How is he now, sir?" she said.

"Who?" cried Jonas, raising his head, and staring at her.

"To be sure!" returned the matron with a smile and a curtsey. "What am I thinking of? You was n't here, sir, when he was took so strange. I never see a poor dear creetur took so strange in all my life, except a patient much about the same age, as I once nussed, which his calling was the custom-'us, and his name was Mrs. Harris's own father, as pleasant a singer, Mr. Chuzzlewit, as ever you heerd, with a voice like a Jew's-harp in the bass notes, that it took six men to hold at such times, foaming frightful."

"Chuffey, eh?" said Jonas carelessly, seeing that she went up to the old clerk, and looked at him. "Ha!"

"The creetur's head 's so hot," said Mrs. Gamp, "that you might 'eat a flat-iron at it. And no wonder, I am sure, considerin' the things he said!"

"Said!" cried Jonas. "What did he say?"

Mrs. Gamp laid her hand upon her heart to put some check upon its palpitations, and, turning up her eyes, replied in a faint voice: —

"The awfullest things, Mr. Chuzzlewit, as ever I heerd! Which Mrs. Harris's father never spoke a word when took so, some does and some don't, except sayin' when he come round, 'Where is Sairey Gamp?' But raly, sir, when Mr. Chuffey comes to ask who 's lyin' dead up stairs, and — "

"Who 's lying dead up stairs!" repeated Jonas, standing aghast.

Mrs. Gamp nodded, made as if she were swallowing, and went on.

"Who 's lying dead up stairs; sech was his Bible language; and where was Mr. Chuzzlewit as had the only son; and when he goes up stairs a looking in the beds and wandering about the rooms, and comes down again a whisperin' softly to his-self about foul play and that, it give me sech a turn, I don't deny it, Mr. Chuzzlewit, that I never could have kep' myself up but for a little dram o' spirits, which I seldom touches, but could always wish to know where to find, if so dispoged, never knowin' wot may happen next, the world bein' so uncertain."

"Why, the old fool 's mad!" cried Jonas, much disturbed.

"That 's my opinion, sir," said Mrs. Gamp, "and I will not deceive you. I believe as Mr. Chuffey, sir, rekwires attention (if I may make so bold), and should not have his liberty to wex and worrit your sweet lady as he does."

"Why, who minds what he says?" retorted Jonas.

"Still he is worritin', sir," said Mrs. Gamp. "No one don't mind him, but he *is* a ill conwenience."

"Ecod, you 're right," said Jonas, looking doubtfully at the subject of this conversation. "I have half a mind to shut him up."

Mrs. Gamp rubbed her hands, and smiled, and shook her head, and sniffed expressively, as scenting a job.

"Could you — could you take care of such an idiot, now, in some spare room up stairs?" asked Jonas.

"Me and a friend of mine, one off, one on, could do it, Mr. Chuzzlewit," replied the nurse; "our charges not bein' high, but wishin' they was lower, and allowance made considerin' not strangers. Me and Betsey Prig, sir, would undertake Mr. Chuffey, reasonable," said Mrs. Gamp, looking at him with her head on one side, as if he had been a piece of goods, for which she was driving a bargain; "and give every satigefaction. Betsey Prig has nussed a many lunacies, and well she knows their ways, which puttin' 'em right close afore the fire, when fractious, is the certainest and most compoging."

While Mrs. Gamp discoursed to this effect, Jonas was walking up and down the room again, glancing covertly at the old clerk, as he did so. He now made a stop, and said: —

"I must look after him, I suppose, or I may have him doing some mischief. What say you?"

"Nothin' more likely!" Mrs. Gamp replied. "As well I have experienged, I do assure you, sir."

"Well! Look after him for the present, and — let me see — three days from this time let the other woman come here, and we 'll see if we can make a bargain of it. About nine or ten o'clock at night, say. Keep your eye upon him in the mean while, and don't talk about it. He 's as mad as a March hare!"

"Madder!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "A deal madder!"

"See to him, then; take care that he does no harm; and recollect what I have told you."

Leaving Mrs. Gamp in the act of repeating all she had been told, and of producing, in support of her memory and trustworthiness, many commendations selected from among the most remarkable opinions of the celebrated Mrs. Harris, he descended to the little room prepared for him, and, pulling off his coat and his boots, put them outside the door before he locked it. In locking it, he was careful so to adjust the key as to baffle any curious person who might try to peep in through the keyhole; and when he had taken these precautions, he sat down to his supper.

"Mr. Chuff," he muttered, "it 'll be pretty easy to be even with *you*. It 's of no use doing things by halves, and, as long as I stop here, I 'll take good care of you. When I am off, you may say what you please. But it 's a d—d strange thing," he added, pushing away his untouched plate, and striding moodily to and fro, "that his drivellings should have taken this turn just now."

After pacing the little room from end to end several times, he sat down in another chair.

"I say just now, but for anything I know, he may have been carrying on the same game all along. Old dog! He shall be gagged!"

He paced the room again in the same restless and unsteady way; and then sat down upon the bedstead, leaning his chin upon his hand, and looking at the table. When he had looked at it for a long time, he remembered his supper; and resuming the chair he had first occupied, began to eat with great rapacity, — not like a hungry man, but as if he were de-

termined to do it. He drank too, roundly; sometimes stopping in the middle of a draught to walk, and change his seat and walk again, and dart back to the table and fall to, in a ravenous hurry, as before.

It was now growing dark. As the gloom of evening, deepening into night, came on, another dark shade emerging from within him seemed to overspread his face, and slowly change it. Slowly, slowly; darker and darker; more and more haggard; creeping over him by little and little; until it was black night within him and without.

The room in which he had shut himself up was on the ground floor, at the back of the house. It was lighted by a dirty skylight, and had a door in the wall, opening into a narrow covered passage or blind alley, very little frequented after five or six o'clock in the evening, and not in much use as a thoroughfare at any hour. But it had an outlet in a neighbouring street.

The ground on which this chamber stood had, at one time, not within his recollection, been a yard; and had been converted to its present purpose, for use as an office. But the occasion for it died with the man who built it; and saving that it had sometimes served as an apology for a spare bedroom, and that the old clerk had once held it (but that was years ago) as his recognised apartment, it had been little troubled by Anthony Chuzzlewit and Son. It was a blotched, stained, mouldering room, like a vault; and there were waterpipes running through it, which at unexpected times in the night, when other things were quiet, clicked and gurgled suddenly, as if they were choking.

The door into the court had not been opened for a long, long time; but the key had always hung in one place, and there it hung now. He was prepared for its being rusty; for he had a little bottle of oil in his pocket and the feather of a pen, with which he lubricated the key, and the lock too, carefully. All this while he had been without his coat, and had nothing on his feet but his stockings. He now got softly into bed, in the same state, and tossed from side to side to tumble it. In his restless condition, that was easily done.

When he arose, he took from his portmanteau, which he had caused to be carried into that place when he came home, a pair of clumsy shoes, and put them on his feet; also a pair of

leather leggings, such as countrymen are used to wear, with straps to fasten them to the waistband. In these he dressed himself at leisure. Lastly, he took out a common frock of coarse dark jean, which he drew over his own under-clothing; and a felt hat — he had purposely left his own up stairs. He then sat down by the door, with the key in his hand, waiting.

He had no light; the time was dreary, long, and awful. The ringers were practising in a neighbouring church, and the clashing of the bells was almost maddening. Curse the clamouring bells, they seemed to know that he was listening at the door, and to proclaim it in a crowd of voices to all the town! Would they never be still?

They ceased at last, and then the silence was so new and terrible that it seemed the prelude to some dreadful noise. Footsteps in the court! Two men. He fell back from the door on tiptoe, as if they could have seen him through its wooden panels.

They passed on, talking (he could make out) about a skeleton which had been dug up yesterday, in some work of excavation near at hand, and was supposed to be that of a murdered man. "So murder is not always found out, you see," they said to one another as they turned the corner.

Hush!

He put the key into the lock, and turned it. The door resisted for a while, but soon came stiffly open; mingling with the sense of fever in his mouth, a taste of rust, and dust, and earth, and rotting wood. He looked out; passed out; locked it after him.

All was clear and quiet as he fled away.

CHAPTER XLVII

CONCLUSION OF THE ENTERPRISE OF MR. JONAS AND HIS FRIEND.

Did no men passing through the dim streets shrink without knowing why, when he came stealing up behind them? As he glided on, had no child in its sleep an indistinct perception of a guilty shadow falling on its bed, that troubled its innocent rest? Did no dog howl, and strive to break its rattling chain, that it might tear him; no burrowing rat, scenting the work he had in hand, essay to gnaw a passage after him, that it might hold a greedy revel at the feast of his providing? When he looked back, across his shoulder, was it to see if his quick footsteps still fell dry upon the dusty pavement, or were already moist and clogged with the red mire that stained the naked feet of Cain?

He shaped his course for the main western road, and soon reached it; riding a part of the way, then alighting and walking on again. He travelled for a considerable distance upon the roof of a stage-coach, which came up while he was afoot; and when it turned out of his road, bribed the driver of a return post-chaise to take him on with him; and then made across the country at a run, and saved a mile or two before he struck again into the road. At last, as his plan was, he came up with a certain lumbering, slow night-coach, which stopped wherever it could, and was stopping then at a public-house, while the guard and coachman ate and drank within.

He bargained for a seat outside this coach, and took it. And he quitted it no more until it was within a few miles of its destination, but occupied the same place all night.

All night! It is a common fancy that nature seems to sleep by night. It is a false fancy, as who should know better than he!

The fishes slumbered in the cold, bright, glistening streams and rivers, perhaps; and the birds roosted on the branches of the trees; and in their stalls and pastures beasts were quiet; and human creatures slept. But what of that, when the

solemn night was watching, when it never winked, when its darkness watched no less than its light! The stately trees, the moon and shining stars, the softly stirring wind, the overshadowed lane, the broad, bright country-side, they all kept watch. There was not a blade of growing grass or corn but watched; and the quieter it was, the more intent and fixed its watch upon him seemed to be.

And yet he slept. Riding on among these sentinels of God, he slept, and did not change the purpose of his journey. If he forgot it in his troubled dreams, it came up steadily, and woke him. But it never woke him to remorse or to abandonment of his design.

He dreamed at one time that he was lying calmly in his bed, thinking of a moonlight night and the noise of wheels, when the old clerk put his head in at the door, and beckoned him. At this signal he arose immediately — being already dressed, in the clothes he actually wore at that time — and accompanied him into a strange city, where the names of the streets were written on the walls in characters quite new to him; which gave him no surprise or uneasiness, for he remembered in his dream to have been there before. Although these streets were very precipitous, insomuch that to get from one to another it was necessary to descend great heights by ladders that were too short, and ropes that moved deep bells, and swung and swayed as they were clung to, the danger gave him little emotion beyond the first thrill of terror; his anxieties being concentrated on his dress, which was quite unfitted for some festival that was about to be holden there, and in which he had come to take a part. Already great crowds began to fill the streets, and in one direction myriads of people came rushing down an interminable perspective, strewing flowers and making way for others on white horses, when a terrible figure started from the throng, and cried out that it was the Last Day for all the world. The cry being spread, there was a wild hurrying on to Judgment; and the press became so great that he and his companion (who was constantly changing, and was never the same man two minutes together, though he never saw one man come or another go), stood aside in a porch, fearfully surveying the multitude; in which there were many faces that he knew, and many that he did not know, but dreamed he knew; when all at once a struggling head rose up among the rest

— livid and deadly, but the same as he had known it — and denounced him as having appointed that direful day to happen. They closed together. As he strove to free the hand in which he held a club, and strike the blow he had so often thought of, he started to the knowledge of his waking purpose and the rising of the sun.

The sun was welcome to him. There were life and motion, and a world astir, to divide the attention of Day. It was the eye of Night — of wakeful, watchful, silent, and attentive Night, with so much leisure for the observation of his wicked thoughts — that he dreaded most. There is no glare in the night. Even Glory shows to small advantage in the night, upon a crowded battle-field. How then shows Glory's blood-relation, bastard Murder!

Ay! He made no compromise, and held no secret with himself now. Murder. He had come to do it.

"Let me get down here," he said.

"Short of the town, eh?" observed the coachman.

"I may get down where I please, I suppose?"

"You got up to please yourself, and may get down to please yourself. It won't break our hearts to lose you, and it would n't have broken 'em if we 'd never found you. Be a little quicker. That 's all."

The guard had alighted, and was waiting in the road to take his money. In the jealousy and distrust of what he contemplated, he thought this man looked at him with more than common curiosity.

"What are you staring at?" said Jonas.

"Not at a handsome man," returned the guard. "If you want your fortune told, I 'll tell you a bit of it. You won't be drowned. That 's a consolation for you."

Before he could retort or turn away, the coachman put an end to the dialogue by giving him a cut with his whip, and bidding him get out for a surly dog. The guard jumped up to his seat at the same moment, and they drove off, laughing, leaving him to stand in the road, and shake his fist at them. He was not displeased though, on second thoughts, to have been taken for an ill-conditioned common country fellow; but rather congratulated himself upon it as a proof that he was well disguised.

Wandering into a copse by the roadside — but not in that

place; two or three miles off — he tore out from a fence a thick, hard, knotted stake; and, sitting down beneath a hayrick, spent some time in shaping it, in peeling off the bark, and fashioning its jagged head with his knife.

The day passed on. Noon, afternoon, evening. Sunset.

At that serene and peaceful time two men, riding in a gig, came out of the city by a road not much frequented. It was the day on which Mr. Pecksniff had agreed to dine with Montague. He had kept his appointment, and was now going home. His host was riding with him for a short distance; meaning to return by a pleasant track, which Mr. Pecksniff had engaged to show him, through some fields. Jonas knew their plans. He had hung about the inn-yard while they were at dinner and had heard their orders given.

They were loud and merry in their conversation, and might have been heard at some distance; far above the sound of their carriage wheels or horse's hoofs. They came on noisily, to where a stile and footpath indicated their point of separation. Here they stopped.

"It 's too soon — much too soon," said Mr. Pecksniff. "But this is the place, my dear sir. Keep the path, and go straight through the little wood you 'll come to. The path is narrower there, but you can't miss it. When shall I see you again? Soon, I hope?"

"I hope so," replied Montague.

"Good night!"

"Good night. And a pleasant ride!"

So long as Mr. Pecksniff was in sight, and turned his head, at intervals, to salute him, Montague stood in the road smiling, and waving his hand. But when his new partner had disappeared, and this show was no longer necessary, he sat down on the stile with looks so altered, that he might have grown ten years older in the mean time.

He was flushed with wine, but not gay. His scheme had succeeded, but he showed no triumph. The effort of sustaining his difficult part before his late companion had fatigued him perhaps, or it may be that the evening whispered to his conscience, or it may be (as it *has* been) that a shadowy veil was dropping round him, closing out all thoughts but the presentiment and vague foreknowledge of impending doom.

If there be fluids, as we know there are, which, conscious of

a coming wind, or rain, or frost, will shrink and strive to hide themselves in their glass arteries, may not that subtile liquor of the blood perceive by properties within itself that hands are raised to waste and spill it, and in the veins of men run cold and dull as his did in that hour!

So cold, although the air was warm, so dull, although the sky was bright, that he rose up shivering from his seat, and hastily resumed his walk. He checked himself as hastily, undecided whether to pursue the footpath, which was lonely and retired, or to go back by the road.

He took the footpath.

The glory of the departing sun was on his face. The music of the birds was in his ears. Sweet wild flowers bloomed about him. Thatched roofs of poor men's homes were in the distance; and an old gray spire surmounted by a Cross rose up between him and the coming night.

He had never read the lesson which these things conveyed; he had ever mocked and turned away from it; but, before going down into a hollow place, he looked round, once, upon the evening prospect sorrowfully. Then he went down, down, down into the dell.

It brought him to the wood; a close, thick, shadowy wood, through which the path went winding on, dwindling away into a slender sheep-track. He paused before entering; for the stillness of this spot almost daunted him.

The last rays of the sun were shining in aslant, making a path of golden light along the stems and branches in its range, which, even as he looked, began to die away, yielding gently to the twilight that came creeping on. It was so very quiet that the soft and stealthy moss about the trunks of some old trees seemed to have grown out of the silence, and to be its proper offspring. Those other trees which were subdued by blasts of wind in winter time had not quite tumbled down, but being caught by others, lay all bare and scathed across their leafy arms, as if unwilling to disturb the general repose by the crash of their fall. Vistas of silence opened everywhere, into the heart and innermost recesses of the wood; beginning with the likeness of an aisle, a cloister, or a ruin open to the sky; then tangling off into a deep green rustling mystery, through which gnarled trunks, and twisted boughs, and ivy-covered stems, and trembling leaves, and bark-stripped

bodies of old trees stretched out at length were faintly seen in beautiful confusion.

As the sunlight died away, and evening fell upon the wood, he entered it. Moving, here and there, a bramble or a drooping bough which stretched across his path, he slowly disappeared. At intervals a narrow opening showed him passing on, or the sharp cracking of some tender branch denoted where he went; then, he was seen or heard no more.

Never more beheld by mortal eye, or heard by mortal ear, one man excepted. That man, parting the leaves and branches on the other side, near where the path emerged again, came leaping out soon afterwards.

What had he left within the wood, that he sprang out of it, as if it were a hell?

The body of a murdered man. In one thick solitary spot it lay among the last year's leaves of oak and beech, just as it had fallen headlong down. Sopping and soaking in among the leaves that formed its pillow; oozing down into the boggy ground, as if to cover itself from human sight; forcing its way between and through the curling leaves, as if those senseless things rejected and foreswore it, and were coiled up in abhorrence, went a dark, dark stain that dyed the whole summer night from earth to heaven.

The doer of this deed came leaping from the wood so fiercely, that he cast into the air a shower of fragments of young boughs, torn away in his passage, and fell with violence upon the grass. But he quickly gained his feet again, and keeping underneath a hedge with his body bent, went running on towards the road. The road once reached, he fell into a rapid walk, and set on towards London.

And he was not sorry for what he had done. He was frightened when he thought of it — when did he not think of it! — but he was not sorry. He had had a terror and dread of the wood when he was in it; but being out of it, and having committed the crime, his fears were now diverted, strangely, to the dark room he had left shut up at home. He had a greater horror, infinitely greater, of that room than of the wood. Now that he was on his return to it, it seemed beyond comparison more dismal and more dreadful than the wood. His hideous secret was shut up in the room, and all its terrors were there; to his thinking it was not in the wood at all.

He walked on for ten miles; and then stopped at an alehouse for a coach, which he knew would pass through, on its way to London, before long; and which he also knew was not the coach he had travelled down by, for it came from another place. He sat down outside the door here, on a bench, beside a man who was smoking his pipe. Having called for some beer, and drunk, he offered it to this companion, who thanked him, and took a draught. He could not help thinking that, if the man had known all, he might scarcely have relished drinking out of the same cup with him.

"A fine night, master!" said this person. "And a rare sunset."

"I did n't see it," was his hasty answer.

"Did n't see it?" returned the man.

"How the devil could I see it, if I was asleep?"

"Asleep? Ay, ay." The man appeared surprised by his unexpected irritability, and saying no more, smoked his pipe in silence. They had not sat very long, when there was a knocking within.

"What 's that?" cried Jonas.

"Can't say, I 'm sure," replied the man.

He made no further inquiry, for the last question had escaped him in spite of himself. But he was thinking, at the moment, of the closed-up room; of the possibility of their knocking at the door on some special occasion; of their being alarmed at receiving no answer; of their bursting it open; of their finding the room empty; of their fastening the door into the court, and rendering it impossible for him to get into the house without showing himself in the garb he wore; which would lead to rumour, rumour to detection, detection to death. At that instant, as if by some design and order of circumstances, the knocking had come.

It still continued; like a warning echo of the dread reality he had conjured up. As he could not sit and hear it, he paid for his beer and walked on again. And having slunk about in places unknown to him all day, and being out at night in a lonely road, in an unusual dress, and in that wandering and unsettled frame of mind, he stopped more than once to look about him, hoping he might be in a dream.

Still he was not sorry. No. He had hated the man too much, and had been bent, too desperately and too long, on

setting himself free. If the thing could have come over again, he would have done it again. His malignant and revengeful passions were not so easily laid. There was no more penitence or remorse within him now than there had been while the deed was brewing.

Dread and fear were upon him, to an extent he had never counted on, and could not manage in the least degree. He was so horribly afraid of that infernal room at home. This made him, in a gloomy, murderous, mad way, not only fearful *for* himself but *of* himself; for being, as it were, a part of the room — a something supposed to be there, yet missing from it — he invested himself with its mysterious terrors; and when he pictured in his mind the ugly chamber, false and quiet, false and quiet, through the dark hours of two nights, and the tumbled bed, and he not in it, though believed to be, he became in a manner his own ghost and phantom, and was at once the haunting spirit and the haunted man.

When the coach came up, which it soon did, he got a place outside, and was carried briskly onward towards home. Now, in taking his seat among the people behind, who were chiefly country people, he conceived a fear that they knew of the murder, and would tell him that the body had been found; which, considering the time and place of the commission of the crime, were events almost impossible to have happened yet, as he very well knew. But, although he did know it, and had therefore no reason to regard their ignorance as anything but the natural sequence to the facts, still this very ignorance of theirs encouraged him. So far encouraged him, that he began to believe the body never would be found, and began to speculate on that probability. Setting off from this point, and measuring time by the rapid hurry of his guilty thoughts, and what had gone before the bloodshed, and the troops of incoherent and disordered images of which he was the constant prey, he came by daylight to regard the murder as an old murder, and to think himself comparatively safe, because it had not been discovered yet. Yet! When the sun which looked into the wood, and gilded with its rising light a dead man's face, had seen that man alive, and sought to win him to a thought of Heaven, on its going down last night!

But here were London streets again. Hush!

It was but five o'clock. He had time enough to reach his

own house unobserved, and before there were many people in the streets, if nothing had happened so far, tending to his discovery. He slipped down from the coach without troubling the driver to stop his horses; and hurrying across the road, and in and out of every by-way that lay near his course, at length approached his own dwelling. He used additional caution in his immediate neighbourhood; halting first to look all down the street before him, then gliding swiftly through that one, and stopping to survey the next, and so on.

The passage-way was empty when his murderer's face looked into it. He stole on to the door, on tiptoe, as if he dreaded to disturb his own imaginary rest.

He listened — not a sound. As he turned the key with a trembling hand, and pushed the door softly open with his knee, a monstrous fear beset his mind.

What if the murdered man were there before him!

He cast a fearful glance all round. But there was nothing there.

He went in, locked the door, drew the key through and through the dust and damp in the fire-place to sully it again, and hung it up as of old. He took off his disguise, tied it up in a bundle ready for carrying away and sinking in the river before night, and locked it up in a cupboard. These precautions taken, he undressed, and went to bed.

The raging thirst, the fire that burnt within him as he lay beneath the clothes, the augmented horror of the room when they shut it out from his view; the agony of listening, in which he paid enforced regard to every sound, and thought the most unlikely one the prelude to that knocking which should bring the news; the starts with which he left his couch, and looking in the glass, imagined that his deed was broadly written in his face, and lying down and burying himself once more beneath the blankets, heard his own heart beating Murder, Murder, Murder, in the bed; what words can paint tremendous truths like these!

The morning advanced. There were footsteps in the house. He heard the blinds drawn up, and shutters opened; and now and then a stealthy tread outside his own door. He tried to call out, more than once, but his mouth was dry as if it had been filled with sand. At last he sat up in his bed, and cried: —

"Who 's there?"

It was his wife.

He asked her what it was o'clock. Nine.

"Did — did no one knock at my door, yesterday?" he faltered. "Something disturbed me; but unless you had knocked the door down, you would have got no notice from me."

"No one," she replied. That was well. He had waited, almost breathless, for her answer. It was a relief to him, if anything could be.

"Mr. Nadgett wanted to see you," she said, "but I told him you were tired, and had requested not to be disturbed. He said it was of little consequence, and went away. As I was opening my window, to let in the cool air, I saw him passing through the street this morning, very early; but he has n't been again."

Passing through the street that morning, very early! Jonas trembled at the thought of having had a narrow chance of seeing him himself — even him, who had no object but to avoid people, and sneak on unobserved, and keep his own secrets, and who saw nothing.

He called to her to get his breakfast ready, and prepared to go up stairs; attiring himself in the clothes he had taken off when he came into that room, which had been, ever since, outside the door. In his secret dread of meeting the household for the first time, after what he had done, he lingered at the door on slight pretexts that they might see him without looking in his face; and left it ajar while he dressed; and called out to have the windows opened, and the pavement watered, that they might become accustomed to his voice. Even when he had put off the time, by one means or other, so that he had seen or spoken to them all, he could not muster courage for a long while to go in among them, but stood at his own door listening to the murmur of their distant conversation.

He could not stop there for ever, and so joined them. His last glance at the glass had seen a tell-tale face, but that might have been because of his anxious looking in it. He dared not look at them to see if they observed him, but he thought them very silent.

And whatsoever guard he kept upon himself, he could not help listening, and showing that he listened. Whether he attended to their talk, or tried to think of other things, or

talked himself, or held his peace, or resolutely counted the tickings of a hoarse clock at his back, he always lapsed, as if spell were on him, into eager listening; for he knew it come, and his present punishment, and torture, and distra were to listen for its coming.

Hush!

CHAPTER XLVIII

BEARS TIDINGS OF MARTIN, AND OF MARK, AS WELL AS OF A THIRD PERSON NOT QUITE UNKNOWN TO THE READER; EXHIBITS FILIAL PIETY IN AN UGLY ASPECT, AND CASTS A DOUBTFUL RAY OF LIGHT UPON A VERY DARK PLACE.

Tom Pinch and Ruth were sitting at their early breakfast, with the window open, and a row of the freshest little plants ranged before it on the inside, by Ruth's own hands; and Ruth had fastened a sprig of geranium in Tom's button-hole, to make him very smart and summer-like for the day (it was obliged to be fastened in, or that dear old Tom was certain to lose it); and people were crying flowers up and down the street; and a blundering bee, who had got himself in between the two sashes of the window, was bruising his head against the glass, endeavouring to force himself out into the fine morning, and considering himself enchanted because he could n't do it; and the morning was as fine a morning as ever was seen; and the fragrant air was kissing Ruth and rustling about Tom, as if it said, "How are you, my dears? I came all this way on purpose to salute you;" and it was one of those glad times when we form, or ought to form, the wish that every one on earth were able to be happy, and catching glimpses of the summer of the heart, to feel the beauty of the summer of the year.

It was even a pleasanter breakfast than usual; and it was always a pleasant one. For little Ruth had now two pupils to attend, each three times a week, and each two hours at a time; and besides this, she had painted some screens and card-racks, and, unknown to Tom (was there ever anything so delightful!) had walked into a certain shop which dealt in such articles, after often peeping through the window; and had taken courage to ask the mistress of that shop whether she would buy them. And the mistress had not only bought them, but had ordered more; and that very morning Ruth had made confession of these facts to Tom, and had handed him the money in a little purse she had worked expressly for the purpose. They had

been in a flutter about this, and perhaps had shed a happy tear or two for anything the history knows to the contrary; but it was all over now, and a brighter face than Tom's, or a brighter face than Ruth's, the bright sun had not looked on since he went to bed last night.

"My dear girl," said Tom, coming so abruptly on the subject that he interrupted himself in the act of cutting a slice of bread, and left the knife sticking in the loaf, "what a queer fellow our landlord is! I don't believe he has been home once, since he got me into that unsatisfactory scrape. I begin to think he will never come home again. What a mysterious life that man does lead, to be sure!"

"Very strange. Is it not, Tom?"

"Really," said Tom, "I hope it is only strange. I hope there may be nothing wrong in it. Sometimes I begin to be doubtful of that. I must have an explanation with him," said Tom, shaking his head as if this were a most tremendous threat, "when I can catch him!"

A short double-knock at the door put Tom's menacing looks to flight, and awakened an expression of surprise instead.

"Heyday!" said Tom. "An early hour for visitors! It must be John, I suppose."

"I — I — don't think it was his knock, Tom," observed his little sister.

"No?" said Tom. "It surely can't be my employer, suddenly arrived in town; directed here by Mr. Fips, and come for the key of the office. It 's somebody inquiring for me, I declare! Come in, if you please!"

But when the person came in, Tom Pinch, instead of saying, "Did you wish to speak with me, sir?" or "My name is Pinch, sir; what is your business, may I ask?" or addressing him in any such distant terms, cried out, "Good gracious Heaven!" and seized him by both hands, with the liveliest manifestations of astonishment and pleasure.

The visitor was not less moved than Tom himself, and they shook hands a great many times, without another word being spoken on either side. Tom was the first to find his voice.

"Mark Tapley, too!" said Tom, running towards the door, and shaking hands with somebody else. "My dear Mark, come in. How are you, Mark? He don't look a day older than he used to do, at the Dragon. How *are* you, Mark?"

"Uncommon jolly, sir, thank'ee," returned Mr. Tapley, all ...les and bows. "I hope I see you well, sir."

"Good gracious me!" cried Tom, patting him tenderly on ... back. "How delightful it is to hear his old voice again! ... dear Martin, sit down. My sister, Martin. Mr. Chuzzlewit, ... love. Mark Tapley from the Dragon, my dear. Good gra... me, what a surprise this is! Sit down. Lord bless me!"

Tom was in such a state of excitement that he could n't keep ...self still for a moment, but was constantly running between ...k and Martin, shaking hands with them alternately, and ... senting them over and over again to his sister.

"I remember the day we parted, Martin, as well as if it were ...terday," said Tom. "What a day it was! and what a pas... you were in! And don't you remember my overtaking you ... the road that morning, Mark, when I was going to Salisbury ... the gig to fetch him, and you were looking out for a situa... n! And don't you recollect the dinner we had at Salisbury, ...rtin, with John Westlock, eh? Good gracious me! Ruth, ... dear, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Mark Tapley, my love, from the ...gon. More cups and saucers, if you please. Bless my ...l, how glad I am to see you both!"

And then Tom (as John Westlock had done on his arrival) ...n off to the loaf to cut some bread and butter for them; and ...re he had spread a single slice, remembered something else, ... came running back again to tell it; and then he shook ...ds with them again; and then he introduced his sister again; ... then he did everything he had done already all over again; ... nothing Tom could do, and nothing Tom could say, was ...f sufficient to express his joy at their safe return.

Mr. Tapley was the first to resume his composure. In a ...ry short space of time he was discovered to have somehow ...talled himself in office as waiter or attendant upon the ...rty; a fact which was first suggested to them by his tempo... ...ry absence in the kitchen, and speedy return with a kettle of ...ing water, from which he replenished the teapot with a ...f-possession that was quite his own.

"Sit down, and take your breakfast, Mark," said Tom. "Make him sit down and take his breakfast, Martin."

"Oh! I gave him up, long ago, as incorrigible," Martin ...plied. "He takes his own way, Tom. You would excuse ...m, Miss Pinch, if you knew his value."

"She knows it, bless you!" said Tom. "I have told her all about Mark Tapley. Have I not, Ruth?"

"Yes, Tom."

"Not all," returned Martin, in a low voice. "The best of Mark Tapley is only known to one man, Tom; and but for Mark he would hardly be alive to tell it."

"Mark!" said Tom Pinch energetically, "if you don't sit down this minute, I 'll swear at you!"

"Well, sir," returned Mr. Tapley, "sooner than you should do that, I 'll com-ply. It 's a considerable invasion of a man's jollity to be made so partickler welcome, but a Werb is a word as signifies to be, to do, or to suffer (which is all the grammar, and enough too, as ever I wos taught); and if there 's a Werb alive, I 'm it. For I am always a bein', sometimes a doin', and continually a sufferin'."

"Not jolly yet?" asked Tom with a smile.

"Why, I was rather so, over the water, sir," returned Mr. Tapley; "and not entirely without credit. But Human Natur' is in a conspiracy again' me; I can't get on. I shall have to leave it in my will, sir, to be wrote upon my tomb: 'He was a man as might have come out strong if he could have got a chance. But it was denied him.'"

Mr. Tapley took this occasion of looking about him with a grin, and subsequently attacking the breakfast, with an appetite not at all expressive of blighted hopes or insurmountable despondency.

In the meanwhile, Martin drew his chair a little nearer to Tom and his sister, and related to them what had passed at Mr. Pecksniff's house; adding in few words a general summary of the distresses and disappointments he had undergone since he left England.

"For your faithful stewardship in the trust I left with you, Tom," he said, "and for all your goodness and disinterestedness, I can never thank you enough. When I add Mary's thanks to mine —"

Ah, Tom! The blood retreated from his cheeks, and came rushing back so violently, that it was pain to feel it; ease though, ease, compared with the aching of his wounded heart.

"When I add Mary's thanks to mine," said Martin, "I have made the only poor acknowledgment it is in our power to offer; but if you knew how much we feel, Tom, you would set some store by it, I am sure."

And if they had known how much Tom felt — but that no human creature ever knew — they would have set some store by him. Indeed they would.

Tom changed the topic of discourse. He was sorry he could not pursue it, as it gave Martin pleasure; but he was unable, at that moment. No drop of envy or bitterness was in his soul; but he could not master the firm utterance of her name.

He inquired what Martin's projects were.

"No longer to make your fortune, Tom," said Martin, "but to try to live. I tried that once in London, Tom; and failed. If you will give me the benefit of your advice and friendly counsel, I may succeed better under your guidance. I will do anything, Tom, anything, to gain a livelihood by my own exertions. My hopes do not soar above that, now."

High-hearted, noble Tom! Sorry to find the pride of his old companion humbled, and to hear him speaking in this altered strain, at once, at once, he drove from his breast the inability to contend with its deep emotions, and spoke out bravely.

"Your hopes do not soar above that," cried Tom. "Yes, they do. How can you talk so! They soar up to the time when you will be happy with her, Martin. They soar up to the time when you will be able to claim her, Martin. They soar up to the time when you will not be able to believe that you were ever cast down in spirit, or poor in pocket, Martin. Advice, and friendly counsel! Why, of course. But you shall have better advice and counsel (though you cannot have more friendly) than mine. You shall consult John Westlock. We'll go there immediately. It is yet so early that I shall have time to take you to his chambers before I go to business; they are in my way; and I can leave you there, to talk over your affairs with him. So come along — come along. I am a man of occupation now, you know," said Tom, with his pleasantest smile; "and have no time to lose. Your hopes don't soar higher than that? I dare say they don't. *I* know you pretty well. They'll be soaring out of sight soon, Martin, and leaving all the rest of us leagues behind."

"Ay! But I may be a little changed," said Martin, "since you knew me pretty well, Tom."

"What nonsense!" exclaimed Tom. "Why should you be changed? You talk as if you were an old man. I never

heard such a fellow! Come to John Westlock's, come. Come along, Mark Tapley. It 's Mark's doing, I have no doubt: and it serves you right for having such a grumbler for your companion."

"There 's no credit to be got through being jolly with *you*, Mr. Pinch, anyways," said Mark, with his face all wrinkled up with grins. "A parish doctor might be jolly with you. There 's nothing short of goin' to the U-nited States for a second trip as would make it at all creditable to be jolly, arter seein' you again!"

Tom laughed, and taking leave of his sister, hurried Mark and Martin out into the street, and away to John Westlock's by the nearest road; for his hour of business was very near at hand, and he prided himself on always being exact to his time.

John Westlock was at home, but, strange to say, was rather embarrassed to see them; and when Tom was about to go into the room where he was breakfasting, said he had a stranger there. It appeared to be a mysterious stranger, for John shut that door as he said it, and led them into the next room.

He was very much delighted, though, to see Mark Tapley; and received Martin with his own frank courtesy. But Martin felt that he did not inspire John Westlock with any unusual interest; and twice or thrice observed that he looked at Tom Pinch doubtfully, not to say compassionately. He thought, and blushed to think, that he knew the cause of this.

"I apprehend you are engaged," said Martin, when Tom had announced the purport of their visit. "If you will allow me to come again at your own time, I shall be glad to do so."

"I *am* engaged," replied John, with some reluctance; "but the matter on which I am engaged is one, to say the truth, more immediately demanding your knowledge than mine."

"Indeed!" cried Martin.

"It relates to a member of your family, and is of a serious nature. If you will have the kindness to remain here, it will be a satisfaction to me to have it privately communicated to you, in order that you may judge of its importance for yourself."

"And in the mean time," said Tom, "I must really take myself off, without any further ceremony."

"Is your business so very particular," asked Martin, "that you cannot remain with us for half an hour? I wish you could. What *is* your business, Tom?"

It was Tom's turn to be embarrassed now: but he plainly said, after a little hesitation: —

"Why, I am not at liberty to say what it is, Martin; though I hope soon to be in a condition to do so, and am aware of no other reason to prevent my doing so now, than the request of my employer. It 's an awkward position to be placed in," said Tom, with an uneasy sense of seeming to doubt his friend, "as I feel every day; but I really cannot help it, can I, John?"

John Westlock replied in the negative; and Martin, expressing himself perfectly satisfied, begged them not to say another word — though he could not help wondering very much what curious office Tom held, and why he was so secret and embarrassed, and unlike himself, in reference to it. Nor could he help reverting to it, in his own mind, several times after Tom went away, which he did as soon as this conversation was ended, taking Mr. Tapley with him, who, as he laughingly said, might accompany him as far as Fleet Street without injury.

"And what do *you* mean to do, Mark?" asked Tom, as they walked on together.

"Mean to do, sir?" returned Mr. Tapley.

"Ay. What course of life do you mean to pursue?"

"Well, sir," said Mr. Tapley. "The fact is, that I have been a thinking rather of the matrimonial line, sir."

"You don't say so, Mark!" cried Tom.

"Yes, sir. I 've been a turnin' of it over."

"And who is the lady, Mark?"

"The which, sir?" said Mr. Tapley.

"The lady. Come! You know what I said," replied Tom laughing, "as well as I do!"

Mr. Tapley suppressed his own inclination to laugh; and with one of his most whimsically-twisted looks, replied: —

"You could n't guess, I suppose, Mr. Pinch?"

"How is it possible?" said Tom. "I don't know any of your flames, Mark. Except Mrs. Lupin, indeed."

"Well, sir!" retorted Mr. Tapley. "And supposing it was her!"

Tom stopping in the street to look at him, Mr. Tapley for a moment presented to his view an utterly stolid and expressionless face; a perfect dead wall of countenance. But open-

ing window after window in it, with astonishing rapidity, and lighting them all up as for a general illumination, he repeated: —

"Supposin', for the sake of argument, as it was her, sir!"

"Why, I thought such a connection would n't suit you, Mark, on any terms!" cried Tom.

"Well, sir, I used to think so myself, once," said Mark. "But I ain't so clear about it now. A dear, sweet creetur, sir!"

"A dear, sweet creature! To be sure she is," cried Tom. "But she always was a dear, sweet creature, was she not?"

"*Was* she not!" assented Mr. Tapley.

"Then why on earth did n't you marry her at first, Mark, instead of wandering abroad, and losing all this time, and leaving her alone by herself, liable to be courted by other people?"

"Why, sir," retorted Mr. Tapley, in a spirit of unbounded confidence, "I 'll tell you how it come about. You know me, Mr. Pinch, sir; there ain't a gentleman alive as knows me better. You 're acquainted with my constitution, and you 're acquainted with my weakness. My constitution is, to be jolly; and my weakness is, to wish to find a credit in it. Wery good, sir. In this state of mind, I gets a notion in my head that she looks on me with a eye of — with what you may call a favourable sort of eye in fact," said Mr. Tapley, with modest hesitation.

"No doubt," replied Tom. "We knew that perfectly well when we spoke on this subject long ago; before you left the Dragon."

Mr. Tapley nodded assent. "Well, sir! But bein' at that time full of hopeful wisions, I arrives at the conclusion that no credit is to be got out of such a way of life as that, where everything agreeable would be ready to one's hand. Lookin' on the bright side of human life in short, one of my hopeful wisions is, that there 's a deal of misery a waitin' for me; in the midst of which I may come out tolerable strong, and be jolly under circumstances as reflects some credit. I goes into the world, sir, wery boyant, and I tries this. I goes aboard ship first, and wery soon discovers (by the ease with which I 'm jolly, mind you) as there 's no credit to be got *there*. I might have took warning by this, and gave it up; but I did n't. I gets to the U-nited States; and then I *do* begin, I won't deny

it, to feel some little credit in sustaining my spirits. What follows? Jest as I 'm beginning to come out, and am a treadin' on the verge, my master deceives me."

"Deceives you!" cried Tom.

"Swindles me," retorted Mr. Tapley, with a beaming face. "Turns his back on ev'rything as made his service a creditable one, and leaves me high and dry, without a leg to stand upon. In which state I returns home. Wery good. Then all my hopeful wisions bein' crushed, and findin' that there ain't no credit for me nowhere, I abandons myself to despair, and says: 'Let me do that as has the least credit in it of all; marry a dear, sweet creetur, as is wery fond of me — me being, at the same time, wery fond of her — lead a happy life, and struggle no more again' the blight which settles on my prospects."

"If your philosophy, Mark," said Tom, who laughed heartily at this speech, "be the oddest I ever heard of, it is not the worst wise. Mrs. Lupin has said 'yes,' of course?"

"Why, no, sir," replied Mr. Tapley; "she has n't gone so far as that yet. Which I attribute principally to my not havin' asked her. But we was wery agreeable together — comfortable, I may say — the night I come home. It 's all right, sir."

"Well!" said Tom, stopping at the Temple Gate. "I wish you joy, Mark, with all my heart. I shall see you again to-day, I dare say. Good-by for the present."

"Good-by, sir! Good-by, Mr. Pinch," he added, by way of soliloquy, as he stood looking after him. "Although you *are* a damper to a honourable ambition. You little think it, but you was the first to dash my hopes. Pecksniff would have built me up for life, but your sweet temper pulled me down. Good-by, Mr. Pinch!"

While these confidences were interchanged between Tom Pinch and Mark, Martin and John Westlock were very differently engaged. They were no sooner left together than Martin said, with an effort he could not disguise: —

"Mr. Westlock, we have met only once before, but you have known Tom a long while, and that seems to render you familiar to me. I cannot talk freely with you on any subject unless I relieve my mind of what oppresses it just now. I see with pain that you so far mistrust me that you think me likely to impose on Tom's regardlessness of himself, or on his kind nature, or some of his good qualities."

"I had no intention," replied John, "of conveying any such impression to you, and am exceedingly sorry to have done so."

"But you entertain it?" said Martin.

"You ask me so pointedly and directly," returned the other, "that I cannot deny the having accustomed myself to regard you as one who, not in wantonness but in mere thoughtlessness of character, did not sufficiently consider his nature and did not quite treat it as it deserves to be treated. It is much easier to slight than to appreciate Tom Pinch."

This was not said warmly, but was energetically spoken too; for there was no subject in the world (but one) on which the speaker felt so strongly.

"I grew into the knowledge of Tom," he pursued, "as I grew towards manhood; and I have learned to love him as something infinitely better than myself. I did not think that you understood him when we met before. I did not think that you greatly cared to understand him. The instances of this which I observed in you were, like my opportunities for observation, very trivial — and were very harmless, I dare say. But they were not agreeable to me, and they forced themselves upon me; for I was not upon the watch for them, believe me. You will say," added John, with a smile, as he subsided into more of his accustomed manner, "that I am not by any means agreeable to you. I can only assure you, in reply, that I would not have originated this topic on any account."

"I originated it," said Martin; "and so far from having any complaint to make against you, highly esteem the friendship you entertain for Tom, and the very many proofs you have given him of it. Why should I endeavour to conceal from you" — he coloured deeply, though — "that I neither understood him nor cared to understand him when I was his companion; and that I am very truly sorry for it now!"

It was so sincerely said, at once so modestly and manfully, that John offered him his hand as if he had not done so before; and Martin giving his in the same open spirit, all constraint between the young men vanished.

"Now, pray," said John, "when I tire your patience very much in what I am going to say, recollect that it has an end to it, and that the end is the point of the story."

With this preface, he related all the circumstances connected with his having presided over the illness and slow recovery of

the patient at the Bull; and tacked on to the skirts of that narrative Tom's own account of the business on the wharf. Martin was not a little puzzled when he came to an end, for the two stories seemed to have no connection with each other, and to leave him, as the phrase is, all abroad.

"If you will excuse me for one moment," said John rising, "I will beg you almost immediately to come into the next room."

Upon that, he left Martin to himself, in a state of considerable astonishment; and soon came back again to fulfil his promise. Accompanying him into the next room, Martin found there a third person; no doubt the stranger of whom his host had spoken when Tom Pinch introduced him.

He was a young man, with deep black hair and eyes. He was gaunt and pale; and evidently had not long recovered from a severe illness. He stood as Martin entered, but sat again at John's desire. His eyes were cast downward; and but for one glance at them both, half in humiliation and half in entreaty, he kept them so, and sat quite still and silent.

"This person's name is Lewsome," said John Westlock, "whom I have mentioned to you as having been seized with an illness at the inn near here, and undergone so much. He has had a very hard time of it, ever since he began to recover; but, as you see, he is now doing well."

As he did not move or speak, and John Westlock made a pause, Martin, not knowing what to say, said that he was glad to hear it.

"The short statement that I wish you to hear from his own lips, Mr. Chuzzlewit," John pursued, looking attentively at him and not at Martin, "he made to me for the first time yesterday, and repeated to me this morning, without the least variation of any essential particular. I have already told you that he informed me before he was removed from the inn, that he had a secret to disclose to me which lay heavy on his mind. But, fluctuating between sickness and health, and between his desire to relieve himself of it, and his dread of involving himself by revealing it, he has, until yesterday, avoided the disclosure. I never pressed him for it (having no idea of its weight or import, or of my right to do so), until within a few days past; when, understanding from him, on his own voluntary avowal in a letter from the country, that it related to a person whose name was Jonas Chuzzlewit, and thinking that

it might throw some light on that little mystery which made Tom anxious now and then, I urged the point upon him, and heard his statement, as you will now, from his own lips. It is due to him to say, that in the apprehension of death, he committed it to writing sometime since, and folded it in a sealed paper, addressed to me; which he could not resolve, however, to place of his own act in my hands. He has the paper in his breast, I believe, at this moment."

The young man touched it hastily, in corroboration of the fact.

"It will be well to leave that in our charge, perhaps," said John. "But do not mind it now."

As he said this, he held up his hand to bespeak Martin's attention. It was already fixed upon the man before him, who, after a short silence said in a low, weak, hollow voice: —

"What relation was Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit, who — "

"— Who died — to me?" said Martin. "He was my grandfather's brother."

"I fear he was made away with. Murdered!"

"My God!" said Martin. "By whom?"

The young man, Lewsome, looked up in his face, and casting down his eyes again, replied: —

"I fear, by me."

"By you?" cried Martin.

"Not by my act, but I fear by my means."

"Speak out!" said Martin, "and speak the truth."

"I fear this *is* the truth."

Martin was about to interrupt him again, but John Westlock saying softly, "Let him tell his story in his own way," Lewsome went on thus: —

"I have been bred a surgeon, and for the last few years have served a general practitioner in the city, as his assistant. While I was in his employment I became acquainted with Jonas Chuzzlewit. He is the principal in this deed."

"What do you mean?" demanded Martin sternly. "Do you know he is the son of the old man of whom you have spoken?"

"I do," he answered.

He remained silent for some moments, when he resumed at the point where he had left off.

"I have reason to know it; for I have often heard him wish

his old father dead, and complain of his being wearisome to him, and a drag upon him. He was in the habit of doing so, at a place of meeting we had — three or four of us — at night. There was no good in the place, you may suppose, when you hear that he was the chief of the party. I wish I had died myself, and never seen it!"

He stopped again; and again resumed as before.

"We met to drink and game; not for large sums, but for sums that were large to us. He generally won. Whether or no, he lent money at interest to those who lost; and in this way, though I think we all secretly hated him, he came to be the master of us. To propitiate him, we made a jest of his father — it began with his debtors; I was one — and we used to toast a quicker journey to the old man, and a swift inheritance to the young one."

He paused again.

"One night he came there in a very bad humour. He had been greatly tried, he said, by the old man that day. He and I were alone together, and he angrily told me that the old man was in his second childhood; that he was weak, imbecile, and drivelling; as unbearable to himself as he was to other people; and that it would be a charity to put him out of the way. He swore that he had often thought of mixing something with the stuff he took for his cough, which should help him to die easily. People were sometimes smothered who were bitten by mad dogs, he said; and why not help these lingering old men out of their troubles too? He looked full at me as he said so, and I looked full at him; but it went no farther that night."

He stopped once more, and was silent for so long an interval, that John Westlock said, "Go on." Martin had never removed his eyes from his face, but was so absorbed in horror and astonishment that he could not speak.

"It may have been a week after that, or it may have been less, or more — the matter was in my mind all the time, but I cannot recollect the time, as I should any other period — when he spoke to me again. We were alone then, too; being there before the usual hour of assembling. There was no appointment between us; but I think I went there to meet him, and I know he came there to meet me. He was there first. He was reading a newspaper when I went in, and nodded to me

without looking up, or leaving off reading. I sat down opposite and close to him. He said, immediately, that he wanted me to get him some of two sorts of drugs. One that was instantaneous in its effect; of which he wanted very little. One that was slow, and not suspicious in appearance; of which he wanted more. While he was speaking to me he still read the newspaper. He said, 'Drugs,' and never used any other word. Neither did I."

"This all agrees with what I have heard before," observed John Westlock.

"I asked him what he wanted the drugs for? He said for no harm; to physic cats; what did it matter to me? I was going out to a distant colony (I had recently got the appointment, which, as Mr. Westlock knows, I have since lost by my sickness, and which was my only hope of salvation from ruin), and what did it matter to me? He could get them without my aid at half a hundred places, but not so easily as he could get them of me. This was true. He might not want them at all, he said, and he had no present idea of using them; but he wished to have them by him. All this time he still read the newspaper. We talked about the price. He was to forgive me a small debt — I was quite in his power — and to pay me five pounds; and there the matter dropped, through others coming in. But, next night, under exactly similar circumstances, I gave him the drugs, on his saying I was a fool to think that he should ever use them for any harm; and he gave me the money. We have never met since. I only know that the poor old father died soon afterwards, just as he would have died from this cause; and that I have undergone, and suffer now, intolerable misery. Nothing," he added, stretching out his hands, "can paint my misery! It is well deserved, but nothing can paint it."

With that he hung his head, and said no more. Wasted and wretched, he was not a creature upon whom to heap reproaches that were unavailing.

"Let him remain at hand," said Martin, turning from him; "but out of sight, in Heaven's name!"

"He will remain here," John whispered. "Come with me!" Softly turning the key upon him as they went out, he conducted Martin into the adjoining room, in which they had been before.

Martin was so amazed, so shocked, and confounded by what he had heard, that it was some time before he could reduce it to any order in his mind, or could sufficiently comprehend the bearing of one part upon another, to take in all the details at one view. When he, at length, had the whole narrative clearly before him, John Westlock went on to point out the great probability of the guilt of Jonas being known to other people, who traded in it for their own benefit, and who were, by such means, able to exert that control over him which Tom Pinch had accidentally witnessed, and unconsciously assisted. This appeared so plain, that they agreed upon it without difficulty; but instead of deriving the least assistance from this source, they found that it embarrassed them the more.

They knew nothing of the real parties who possessed this power. The only person before them was Tom's landlord. They had no right to question Tom's landlord, even if they could find him, which, according to Tom's account, it would not be easy to do. And granting that they did question him, and he answered (which was taking a good deal for granted), he had only to say, with reference to the adventure on the wharf, that he had been sent from such and such a place to summon Jonas back on urgent business, and there was an end of it.

Besides, there was the great difficulty and responsibility of moving at all in the matter. Lewsome's story might be false; in his wretched state it might be greatly heightened by a diseased brain; or admitting it to be entirely true, the old man might have died a natural death. Mr. Pecksniff had been there at the time, as Tom immediately remembered when he came back in the afternoon, and shared their counsels; and there had been no secrecy about it. Martin's grandfather was of right the person to decide upon the course that should be taken; but to get at his views would be impossible, for Mr. Pecksniff's views were certain to be his. And the nature of Mr. Pecksniff's views in reference to his own son-in-law might be easily reckoned upon.

Apart from these considerations, Martin could not endure the thought of seeming to grasp at this unnatural charge against his relative, and using it as a stepping-stone to his grandfather's favour. But that he would seem to do so, if he presented himself before his grandfather in Mr. Pecksniff's

house again, for the purpose of declaring it; and that Mr. Pecksniff, of all men, would represent his conduct in that despicable light, he perfectly well knew. On the other hand, to be in possession of such a statement, and take no measures of further inquiry in reference to it, was tantamount to being a partner in the guilt it professed to disclose.

In a word, they were wholly unable to discover any outlet from this maze of difficulty, which did not lie through some perplexed and entangled thicket. And although Mr. Tapley was promptly taken into their confidence; and the fertile imagination of that gentleman suggested many bold expedients, which, to do him justice, he was quite ready to carry into instant operation on his own personal responsibility; still, bating the general zeal of Mr. Tapley's nature, nothing was made particularly clearer by these offers of service.

It was in this position of affairs that Tom's account of the strange behaviour of the decayed clerk on the night of the tea-party became of great moment, and finally convinced them that to arrive at a more accurate knowledge of the workings of that old man's mind and memory would be to take a most important stride in their pursuit of the truth. So, having first satisfied themselves that no communication had ever taken place between Lewsome and Mr. Chuffey (which would have accounted at once for any suspicions the latter might entertain), they unanimously resolved that the old clerk was the man they wanted.

But, like the unanimous resolution of a public meeting, which will oftentimes declare that this or that grievance is not to be borne a moment longer, which is nevertheless borne for a century or two afterwards without any modification, they only reached in this the conclusion that they were all of one mind. For it was one thing to want Mr. Chuffey, and another thing to get at him; and to do that without alarming him, or without alarming Jonas, or without being discomfited by the difficulty of striking, in an instrument so out of tune and so unused, the note they sought, was an end as far from their reach as ever.

The question then became, who of those about the old clerk had had most influence with him, that night? Tom said his young mistress clearly. But Tom and all of them shrunk from the thought of entrapping her, and making her the inno-

ent means of bringing retribution on her cruel husband. Was there nobody else? Why, yes. In a very different way, Tom said, he was influenced by Mrs. Gamp, the nurse, who had once had the control of him, as he understood, for some time.

They caught at this immediately. Here was a new way out, developed in a quarter until then overlooked. John Westlock knew Mrs. Gamp; he had given her employment; he was acquainted with her place of residence — for that good lady had obligingly furnished him, at parting, with a pack of her professional cards for general distribution. It was decided that Mrs. Gamp should be approached with caution, but approached without delay; and that the depths of that discreet matron's knowledge of Mr. Chuffey, and means of bringing them, or one of them, into communication with him, should be carefully sounded.

On this service, Martin and John Westlock determined to proceed that night; waiting on Mrs. Gamp first, at her lodgings, and taking their chance of finding her in the repose of private life, or of having to seek her out, elsewhere, in the exercise of her professional duties. Tom returned home, that he might lose no opportunity of having an interview with Nadgett, by being absent in the event of his reappearance. And Mr. Tapley remained (by his own particular desire) for the time being in Furnival's Inn, to look after Lewsome; who might safely have been left to himself, however, for any thought he seemed to entertain of giving them the slip.

Before they parted on their several errands, they caused him to read aloud, in the presence of them all, the paper which he had about him, and the declaration he had attached to it, which was to the effect that he had written it voluntarily, in the fear of death, and in the torture of his mind. And when he had done so, they all signed it, and taking it from him, of his free will, locked it in a place of safety.

Martin also wrote, by John's advice, a letter to the trustees of the famous Grammar School, boldly claiming the successful design as his, and charging Mr. Pecksniff with the fraud he had committed. In this proceeding also, John was hotly interested; observing with his usual irreverence, that Mr. Pecksniff had been a successful rascal all his life through, and that it would be a lasting source of happiness to him (John) if he could help to do him justice in the smallest particular.

A busy day! But Martin had no lodgings yet; so when these matters were disposed of, he excused himself from dining with John Westlock and was fain to wander out alone, and look for some. He succeeded, after great trouble, in engaging two garrets for himself and Mark, situated in a court in the Strand, not far from Temple Bar. Their luggage, which was waiting for them at a coach-office, he conveyed to this new place of refuge; and it was with a glow of satisfaction, which as a selfish man he never could have known and never had, that, thinking how much pains and trouble he had saved Mark, and how pleased and astonished Mark would be, he afterwards walked up and down, in the Temple, eating a meat pie for his dinner.

CHAPTER XLIX

IN WHICH MRS. HARRIS, ASSISTED BY A TEAPOT, IS THE CAUSE OF A DIVISION BETWEEN FRIENDS.

Mrs. Gamp's apartment in Kingsgate Street, High Holborn, wore, metaphorically speaking, a robe of state. It was swept and garnished for the reception of a visitor. That visitor was Betsey Prig, Mrs. Prig of Bartlemy's; or as some said Barklemy's, or as some said Bardlemy's — for by all these endearing and familiar appellations had the hospital of Saint Bartholomew become a household word among the sisterhood which Betsey Prig adorned.

Mrs. Gamp's apartment was not a spacious one, but, to a contented mind, a closet is a palace; and the first-floor front at Mr. Sweedlepipe's may have been, in the imagination of Mrs. Gamp, a stately pile. If it were not exactly that, to restless intellects, it at least comprised as much accommodation as any person, not sanguine to insanity, could have looked for, in a room of its dimensions. For only keep the bedstead always in your mind, and you were safe. That was the grand secret. Remembering the bedstead, you might even stoop to look under the little round table for anything you had dropped, without hurting yourself much against the chest of drawers, or qualifying as a patient of Saint Bartholomew by falling into the fire.

Visitors were much assisted in their cautious efforts to preserve an unflagging recollection of this piece of furniture, by its size; which was great. It was not a turn-up bedstead, nor yet a French bedstead, nor yet a four-post bedstead, but what is poetically called a tent — the sacking whereof was low and bulgy, insomuch that Mrs. Gamp's box would not go under it, but stopped half way, in a manner which while it did violence to the reason, likewise endangered the legs, of a stranger. The frame too, which would have supported the canopy and hangings if there had been any, was ornamented with divers

pippins carved in timber, which on the slightest provocation and frequently on none at all, came tumbling down; harassing the peaceful guest with inexplicable terrors.

The bed itself was decorated with a patchwork quilt of great antiquity; and at the upper end, upon the side nearest to the door, hung a scanty curtain of blue check, which prevented the zephyrs that were abroad in Kingsgate Street from visiting Mrs. Gamp's head too roughly. Some rusty gowns and other articles of that lady's wardrobe depended from the posts; and these had so adapted themselves by long usage to her figure, that more than one impatient husband coming in precipitately, at about the time of twilight, had been for an instant stricken dumb by the supposed discovery that Mrs. Gamp had hanged herself. One gentleman, coming on the usual hasty errand, had said indeed, that they looked like guardian angels "watching of her in her sleep." But that, as Mrs. Gamp said, "was his first;" and he never repeated the sentiment, though he often repeated his visit.

The chairs in Mrs. Gamp's apartment were extremely large and broad-backed, which was more than a sufficient reason for their being but two in number. They were both elbow-chairs, of ancient mahogany; and were chiefly valuable for the slippery nature of their seats, which had been originally horsehair, but were now covered with a shiny substance of a bluish tint, from which the visitor began to slide away with a dismayed countenance, immediately after sitting down. What Mrs. Gamp wanted in chairs she made up in bandboxes; of which she had a great collection, devoted to the reception of various miscellaneous valuables, which were not, however, as well protected as the good woman, by a pleasant fiction, seemed to think; for, though every bandbox had a carefully closed lid, not one among them had a bottom — owing to which cause, the property within was merely, as it were, extinguished. The chest of drawers having been originally made to stand upon the top of another chest, had a dwarfish, elfin look, alone; but, in regard of its security, it had a great advantage over the bandboxes, for as all the handles had been long ago pulled off, it was very difficult to get at its contents. This indeed was only to be done by one of two devices; either by tilting the whole structure forward until all the drawers fell out together, or by opening them singly with knives, like oysters.

Mrs. Gamp stored all her household matters in a little cupboard by the fireplace; beginning below the surface (as in nature) with the coals, and mounting gradually upwards to the spirits, which, from motives of delicacy, she kept in a teapot. The chimney-piece was ornamented with a small almanack, marked here and there in Mrs. Gamp's own hand, with a memorandum of the date at which some lady was expected to fall due. It was also embellished with three profiles; one in colours, of Mrs. Gamp herself in early life; one in bronze, of a lady in feathers, supposed to be Mrs. Harris, as she appeared when dressed for a ball; and one in black, of Mr. Gamp, deceased. The last was a full length, in order that the likeness might be rendered more obvious and forcible by the introduction of the wooden leg.

A pair of bellows, a pair of pattens, a toasting-fork, a kettle, a pap-boat, a spoon for the administration of medicine to the refractory, and lastly, Mrs. Gamp's umbrella, which as something of great price and rarity was displayed with particular ostentation, completed the decorations of the chimney-piece and adjacent wall. Towards these objects Mrs. Gamp raised her eyes in satisfaction when she had arranged the tea-board, and had concluded her arrangements for the reception of Betsey Prig, even unto the setting forth of two pounds of Newcastle salmon, intensely pickled.

"There! Now drat you, Betsey, don't be long!" said Mrs. Gamp, apostrophising her absent friend. "For I can't abear to wait, I do assure you. To wotever place I goes, I sticks to this one mortar, 'I'm easy pleased; it is but little as I wants; but I must have that little of the best, and to the minit when the clock strikes, else we do not part as I could wish, but bearin' malice in our 'arts.'"

Her own preparations were of the best, for they comprehended a delicate new loaf, a plate of fresh butter, a basin of fine white sugar and other arrangements on the same scale. Even the snuff with which she now refreshed herself was so choice in quality that she took a second pinch.

"There 's the little bell a ringing now," said Mrs. Gamp, hurrying to the stair-head and looking over. "Betsey Prig, my — why it 's that there disapintin' Sweedlepipes, I do believe."

"Yes, it 's me," said the barber in a faint voice; "I 've just come in."

"You 're always a comin' in, I think," muttered Mrs. Gamp to herself, "except wen you 're a going out. I ha'n't no patience with that man!"

"Mrs. Gamp," said the barber. "I say! Mrs. Gamp!"

"Well," cried Mrs. Gamp impatiently, as she descended the stairs. "What is it? Is the Thames afire, and cooking its own fish, Mr. Sweedlepipes? Why, wot 's the man gone and been a doin' of to himself? He 's as white as chalk!"

She added the latter clause of inquiry, when she got down stairs, and found him seated in the shaving-chair, pale and disconsolate.

"You recollect," said Poll. "You recollect young —"

"Not young Wilkins!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "Don't say young Wilkins, wotever you do. If young Wilkins's wife is took —"

"It is n't anybody's wife," exclaimed the little barber. "Bailey, young Bailey!"

"Why, wot do you mean to say that chit 's been a doin' of?" retorted Mrs. Gamp sharply. "Stuff and nonsense, Mr. Sweedlepipes!"

"He has n't been a doing anything!" exclaimed poor Poll, quite desperate. "What do you catch me up so short for, when you see me put out to that extent that I can hardly speak! He 'll never do anything again. He 's done for. He 's killed. The first time I ever see that boy," said Poll, "I charged him too much for a redpoll. I asked him three-halfpence for a penny one, because I was afraid he 'd beat me down. But he did n't. And now he 's dead; and if you was to crowd all the steam-engines and electric fluids that ever was into this shop, and set 'em every one to work their hardest, they could n't square the account, though it 's only a ha'penny!"

Mr. Sweedlepipe turned aside to the towel, and wiped his eyes with it.

"And what a clever boy he was!" he said. "What a surprising young chap he was! How he talked! and what a deal he know'd! Shaved in this very chair he was — only for fun: it was all his fun; he was full of it. Ah! to think that he 'll never be shaved in earnest! The birds might every one have died, and welcome," cried the little barber, looking round him at the cages, and again applying to the towel, "sooner than I 'd have heard this news!"

"How did you ever come to hear it?" said Mrs. Gamp. "Who told you?"

"I went out," returned the little barber, "into the city, to meet a sporting Gent upon the Stock Exchange, that wanted a few slow pigeons to practise at; and when I 'd done with him, I went to get a little drop of beer, and there I heard everybody a talking about it. It 's in the papers."

"You are in a nice state of confugion, Mr. Sweedlepipes, you are!" said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her head; "and my opinion is, as half a dudgeon fresh young lively leeches on your temples would n't be too much to clear your mind, which so I tell you. Wot were they a talkin' on, and wot was in the papers?"

"All about it!" cried the barber. "What else do you suppose? Him and his master were upset on a journey, and he was carried to Salisbury, and was breathing his last when the account came away. He never spoke afterwards. Not a single word. That 's the worst of it to me; but that ain't all. His master can't be found. The other manager of their office in the city — Crimple, David Crimple — has gone off with the money, and is advertised for, with a reward, upon the walls. Mr. Montague, poor young Bailey's master (what a boy he was!) is advertised for, too. Some say he 's slipped off, to join his friend abroad; some say he may n't have got away yet; and they 're looking for him high and low. Their office is a smash; a swindle altogether. But what 's a Life Insurance Office to a Life! And what a Life Young Bailey's was!"

"He was born into a wale," said Mrs. Gamp, with philosophical coolness; "and he lived in a wale; and he must take the consequences of sech a sitiwation. But don't you hear nothink of Mr. Chuzzlewit in all this?"

"No," said Poll, "nothing to speak of. His name was n't printed as one of the board, though some people say it was just going to be. Some believe he was took in, and some believe he was one of the takers-in; but however that may be, they can't prove nothing against him. This morning he went up of his own accord afore the Lord Mayor or some of them city bigwigs, and complained that he 'd been swindled, and that these two persons had gone off and cheated him, and that he had just found out that Montague's name was n't even Montague, but something else. And they do say that he looked like Death, owing to his losses. But Lord forgive me," cried the barber,

coming back again to the subject of his individual grief, "what 's his looks to me! He might have died and welcome, fifty times, and not been such a loss as Bailey!"

At this juncture the little bell rang, and the deep voice of Mrs. Prig struck into the conversation.

"Oh! You 're a talkin' about it, are you!" observed that lady. "Well, I hope you 've got it over, for I ain't interested in it myself."

"My precious Betsey," said Mrs. Gamp, "how late you are!"

The worthy Mrs. Prig replied, with some asperity, "that if perwerse people went off dead, when they was least expected, it warn't no fault of her'n." And further, "that it was quite aggrawation enough to be made late when one was dropping for one's tea, without hearing on it again."

Mrs. Gamp, deriving from this exhibition of repartee some clue to the state of Mrs. Prig's feelings, instantly conducted her up stairs; deeming that the sight of pickled salmon might work a softening change.

But Betsey Prig expected pickled salmon. It was obvious that she did; for her first words, after glancing at the table, were: —

"I know'd she would n't have a cowcumber!"

Mrs. Gamp changed colour, and sat down upon the bedstead.

"Lord bless you, Betsey Prig, your words is true. I quite forgot it!"

Mrs. Prig, looking steadfastly at her friend, put her hand in her pocket, and, with an air of surly triumph, drew forth either the oldest of lettuces or youngest of cabbages, but at any rate, a green vegetable of an expansive nature, and of such magnificent proportions that she was obliged to shut it up like an umbrella before she could pull it out. She also produced a handful of mustard and cress, a trifle of the herb called dandelion, three bunches of radishes, an onion rather larger than an average turnip, three substantial slices of beet root, and a short prong or antler of celery — the whole of this garden-stuff having been publicly exhibited, but a short time before, as a twopenny salad, and purchased by Mrs. Prig, on condition that the vendor could get it all into her pocket. Which had been happily accomplished, in High Holborn, to the breathless interest of a hackney-coach stand. And she laid so little stress on this

surprising forethought, that she did not even smile, but returning her pocket into its accustomed sphere, merely recommended that these productions of nature should be sliced up, for immediate consumption, in plenty of vinegar.

"And don't go a dropping none of your snuff in it," said Mrs. Prig. "In gruel, barley-water, apple-tea, mutton-broth, and that, it don't signify. It stimilates a patient. But I don't relish it myself."

"Why, Betsey Prig!" cried Mrs. Gamp, "how *can* you talk so!"

"Why, ain't your patients, wotever their diseases is, always a sneezin' their wery heads off, along of your snuff?" said Mrs. Prig.

"And wot if they are?" said Mrs. Gamp.

"Nothing if they are," said Mrs. Prig. "But don't deny it, Sairah."

"Who deniges of it?" Mrs. Gamp inquired.

Mrs. Prig returned no answer.

"WHO deniges of it, Betsey?" Mrs. Gamp inquired again. Then Mrs. Gamp, by reversing the question, imparted a deeper and more awful character of solemnity to the same. "Betsey, who deniges of it?"

It was the nearest possible approach to a very decided difference of opinion between these ladies; but Mrs. Prig's impatience for the meal being greater at the moment than her impatience of contradiction, she replied, for the present, "Nobody, if you don't, Sairah," and prepared herself for tea. For a quarrel can be taken up at any time, but a limited quantity of salmon cannot.

Her toilet was simple. She had merely to "chuck" her bonnet and shawl upon the bed; give her hair two pulls, one upon the right side and one upon the left, as if she were ringing a couple of bells; and all was done. The tea was already made, Mrs. Gamp was not long over the salad, and they were soon at the height of their repast.

The temper of both parties was improved, for the time being, by the enjoyments of the table. When the meal came to a termination (which it was pretty long in doing), and Mrs. Gamp having cleared away, produced the teapot from the top shelf, simultaneously with a couple of wine-glasses, they were quite amiable.

"Betsey," said Mrs. Gamp, filling her own glass, and passing the teapot, "I will now propoge a toast. My frequent pardner, Betsey Prig!"

"Which, altering the name to Sairah Gamp, I drink," said Mrs. Prig, "with love and tenderness."

From this moment symptoms of inflammation began to lurk in the nose of each lady; and perhaps, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, in the temper also.

"Now, Sairah," said Mrs. Prig, "joining business with pleasure, wot is this case in which you wants me?"

Mrs. Gamp betraying in her face some intention of returning an evasive answer, Betsey added: —

"*Is* it Mrs. Harris?"

"No, Betsey Prig, it ain't," was Mrs. Gamp's reply.

"Well!" said Mrs. Prig, with a short laugh. "I'm glad of that, at any rate."

"Why should you be glad of that, Betsey?" Mrs. Gamp retorted warmly. "She is unbeknown to you except by hearsay; why should you be glad? If you have anythink to say contrairy to the character of Mrs. Harris, which well I knows behind her back, afore her face, or anywheres, is not to be impeaged, out with it, Betsey. I have know'd that sweetest and best of women," said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her head, and shedding tears, "ever since afore her First, which Mr. Harris who was dreadful timid went and stopped his ears in a empty dog-kennel, and never took his hands away or come out once till he was showed the baby, wen bein' took with fits the doctor collared him and laid him on his back upon the airy stones, and she was told to ease her mind, his 'owls was organs. And I have know'd her, Betsey Prig, wen he has hurt her feelin' 'art by sayin' of his Ninth that it was one too many, if not two, while that dear innocent was cooin' in his face, which thrive it did though bandy, but I have never know'd as you had occagion to be glad, Betsey, on accounts of Mrs. Harris not requiring you. Require she never will, depend upon it, for her constant words in sickness is, and will be, 'Send for Sairey!'"

During this touching address, Mrs. Prig adroitly feigning to be the victim of that absence of mind which has its origin in excessive attention to one topic, helped herself from the teapot without appearing to observe it. Mrs. Gamp observed it, however, and came to a premature close in consequence.

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"Well it ain't her, it seems," said Mrs. Prig coldly; "who is it, then?"

"You have heerd me mention, Betsey," Mrs. Gamp replied, after glancing in an expressive and marked manner at the tea-pot, "a person as I took care on at the time as you and me was pardners off and on, in that there fever at the Bull?"

"Old Snuffey," Mrs. Prig observed.

Sarah Gamp looked at her with an eye of fire, for she saw in this mistake of Mrs. Prig another wilful and malignant stab at that same weakness or custom of hers, an ungenerous allusion to which on the part of Betsey had first disturbed their harmony that evening. And she saw it still more clearly, when, politely but firmly correcting that lady by the distinct enunciation of the word "Chuffey," Mrs. Prig received the correction with a diabolical laugh.

The best among us have their failings, and it must be conceded of Mrs. Prig, that if there were a blemish in the goodness of her disposition, it was a habit she had of not bestowing all its sharp and acid properties upon her patients (as a thoroughly amiable woman would have done), but of keeping a considerable remainder for the service of her friends. Highly pickled salmon, and lettuces chopped up in vinegar, may, as viands possessing some acidity of their own, have encouraged and increased this failing in Mrs. Prig; and every application to the tea-pot certainly did; for it was often remarked of her by her friends, that she was most contradictory when most elevated. It is certain that her countenance became about this time derisive and defiant, and that she sat with her arms folded, and one eye shut up, in a somewhat offensive, because obtrusively intelligent, manner.

Mrs. Gamp observing this, felt it the more necessary that Mrs. Prig should know her place, and be made sensible of her exact station in society, as well as of her obligations to herself. She therefore assumed an air of greater patronage and importance, as she went on to answer Mrs. Prig a little more in detail.

"Mr. Chuffey, Betsey," said Mrs. Gamp, "is weak in his mind. Excuge me if I makes remark, that he may neither be so weak as people thinks, nor people may not think he is so weak as they pretends, and what I knows, I knows; and what you don't, you don't; so do not ask me, Betsey. But Mr.

Chuffey's friends has made propojals for his bein' took care on, and has said to me, 'Mrs. Gamp, *will* you undertake it! We could n't think,' they says, 'of trusting him to nobody but you, for, Sairey, you are gold as has passed the furnage. Will you undertake it, at your own price, day and night, and by your own self?' 'No,' I says, 'I will not. Do not reckon on it. There is,' I says, 'but one creetur in the world as I would undertake on sech terms, and her name is Harris. But,' I says, 'I am acquainted with a friend, whose name is Betsey Prig, that I can recommend, and will assist me. Betsey,' I says, 'is always to be trusted under me, and will be guided as I could desire.'"

Here Mrs. Prig, without any abatement of her offensive manner, again counterfeited abstraction of mind, and stretched out her hand to the teapot. It was more than Mrs. Gamp could bear. She stopped the hand of Mrs. Prig with her own, and said, with great feeling: —

"No, Betsey! Drink fair, wotever you do!"

Mrs. Prig, thus baffled, threw herself back in her chair, and closing the same eye more emphatically, and folding her arms tighter, suffered her head to roll slowly from side to side, while she surveyed her friend with a contemptuous smile.

Mrs. Gamp resumed: —

"Mrs. Harris, Betsey —"

"Bother Mrs. Harris!" said Betsey Prig.

Mrs. Gamp looked at her with amazement, incredulity, and indignation; when Mrs. Prig, shutting her eye still closer, and folding her arms still tighter, uttered these memorable and tremendous words: —

"I don't believe there 's no sich a person!"

After the utterance of which expressions, she leaned forward, and snapped her fingers once, twice, thrice, each time nearer to the face of Mrs. Gamp; and then rose to put on her bonnet, as one who felt that there was now a gulf between them, which nothing could ever bridge across.

The shock of this blow was so violent and sudden, that Mrs. Gamp sat staring at nothing with uplifted eyes, and her mouth open as if she were gasping for breath, until Betsey Prig had put on her bonnet and her shawl, and was gathering the latter about her throat. Then Mrs. Gamp rose — morally and physically rose — and denounced her.

"What!" said Mrs. Gamp, "you bage creetur, have I know'd Mrs. Harris five-and-thirty year, to be told at last that there ain't no sech a person livin'! Have I stood her friend in all her troubles, great and small, for it to come at last to sech a end as this, which her own sweet picter hanging up afore you all the time to shame your Bragian words! But well you may n't believe there 's no sech a creetur, for she would n't demean herself to look at you, and often has she said, when I have made mention of your name, which, to my sinful sorrow, I have done, 'What, Sairey Gamp! debage yourself to *her!*' Go along with you!"

"I 'm a goin', ma'am, ain't I?" said Mrs. Prig, stopping as she said it.

"You had better, ma'am," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Do you know who you 're talking to, ma'am?" inquired her visitor.

"Aperiently," said Mrs. Gamp, surveying her with scorn from head to foot, "to Betsey Prig. Aperiently so. *I* know her. No one better. Go along with you!"

"And *you* was a going to take me under you!" cried Mrs. Prig, surveying Mrs. Gamp from head to foot in her turn. "*You* was, was you! Oh, how kind! Why, deuce take your imperence," said Mrs. Prig, with a rapid change from banter to ferocity, "what do you mean?"

"Go along with you!" said Mrs. Gamp. "I blush for you."

"You had better blush a little for yourself, while you *are* about it!" said Mrs. Prig. "You and your Chuffeys! What, the poor old creetur is n't mad enough, is n't he? Aha!"

"He 'd very soon be mad enough, if you had anythink to do with him," said Mrs. Gamp.

"And that 's what I was wanted for, is it?" cried Mrs. Prig triumphantly. "Yes. But you 'll find yourself deceived. I won't go near him. We shall see how you get on without me. I won't have nothink to do with him."

"You never spoke a truer word than that!" said Mrs. Gamp. "Go along with you!"

She was prevented from witnessing the actual retirement of Mrs. Prig from the room, notwithstanding the great desire she had expressed to behold it, by that lady, in her angry withdrawal, coming into contact with the bedstead, and bringing down the previously-mentioned pippins; three or four of which

came rattling on the head of Mrs. Gamp so smartly, that when she recovered from this wooden shower-bath Mrs. Prig was gone.

She had the satisfaction, however, of hearing the deep voice of Betsey, proclaiming her injuries and her determination to have nothing to do with Mr. Chuffey, down the stairs, and along the passage, and even out in Kingsgate Street. Likewise of seeing in her own apartment, in the place of Mrs. Prig, Mr. Sweedlepipe and two gentlemen.

"Why, bless my life!" exclaimed the little barber, "what 's amiss? The noise you ladies have been making, Mrs. Gamp! Why, these two gentlemen have been standing on the stairs outside the door, nearly all the time, trying to make you hear, while you were pelting away, hammer and tongs! It 'll be the death of the little bullfinch in the shop, that draws his own water. In his fright, he 's been a straining himself all to bits, drawing more water than he could drink in a twelvemonth. He must have thought it was Fire!"

Mrs. Gamp had in the meanwhile sunk into her chair, from whence, turning up her overflowing eyes and clasping her hands, she delivered the following lamentation: —

"Oh, Mr. Sweedlepipes, which Mr. Westlock also, if my eyes do not deceive, and a friend not havin' the pleasure of bein' beknown, wot I have took from Betsey Prig this blessed night, no mortial creetur knows! If she had abuged me, bein' in liquor, which I thought I smelt her wen she come, but could not so believe, not bein' used myself" — Mrs. Gamp, by the way was pretty far gone, and the fragrance of the teapot was strong in the room — "I could have bore it with a thankful 'art. But the words she spoke of Mrs. Harris, lambs could not forgive. No, Betsey!" said Mrs. Gamp, in a violent burst of feeling, "nor worms forget!"

The little barber scratched his head, and shook it, and looked at the teapot, and gradually got out of the room. John Westlock, taking a chair, sat down on one side of Mrs. Gamp. Martin, taking the foot of the bed, supported her on the other.

"You wonder what we want, I dare say," observed John. "I 'll tell you presently, when you have recovered. It 's not pressing, for a few minutes or so. How do you find yourself? Better?"

Mrs. Gamp shed more tears, shook her head, and feebly pronounced Mrs. Harris's name.

"Have a little" — John was at a loss what to call it.

"Tea," suggested Martin.

"It ain't tea," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Physic of some sort, I suppose," cried John. "Have a little."

Mrs. Gamp was prevailed upon to take a glassful. "On condition," she passionately observed, "as Betsey never has another stroke of work from me."

"Certainly not," said John. "She shall never help to nurse me."

"To think," said Mrs. Gamp, "as she should ever have helped to nuss that friend of yourn, and been so near of hearing things that — Ah!"

John looked at Martin.

"Yes," he said. "That was a narrow escape, Mrs. Gamp."

"Narrer, in-deed!" she returned. "It was only my having the night, and hearin' of him in his wanderin's, and her the day, that saved it. Wot would she have said and done, if she had know'd what *I* know; that perfeejus wretch! Yet, oh, good gracious me!" cried Mrs. Gamp, trampling on the floor, in the absence of Mrs. Prig, "that I should hear from that same woman's lips what I have heerd her speak of Mrs. Harris!"

"Never mind," said John. "You know it is not true."

"Is n't true!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "True! Don't I know as that dear woman is expecting of me at this minnit, Mr. Westlock, and is a lookin' out of window down the street, with little Tommy Harris in her arms, as calls me his own Gammy, and truly calls, for bless the mottled little legs of that there precious child (like Canterbury Brawn his own dear father says, which so they are) his own I have been, ever since I found him, Mr. Westlock, with his small red worsted shoe a gurglin' in his throat, where he had put it in his play, a chick, wile they was leavin' of him on the floor a looking for it through the 'ouse and him a choakin' sweetly in the parlour! Oh, Betsey Prig, what wickedness you 've showed this night, but never shall you darken Sairey's doors agen, you twining serpiant!"

"You were always so kind to her, too!" said John consolingly.

"That 's the cutting part. That 's where it hurts me, Mr. Westlock," Mrs. Gamp replied; holding out her glass unconsciously, while Martin filled it.

"Chosen to help you with Mr. Lewsome!" said John. "Chosen to help you with Mr. Chuffey!"

"Chose once, but chose no more," cried Mrs. Gamp. "No pardnership with Betsey Prig agen, sir!"

"No, no," said John. "That would never do."

"I don't know as it ever would have done, sir," Mrs. Gamp replied, with the solemnity peculiar to a certain stage of intoxication. "Now that the marks," by which Mrs. Gamp is supposed to have meant mask, "is off that creetur's face, I do not think it ever would have done. There are reagions in families for keeping things a secret, Mr. Westlock, and havin' only them about you as you knows you can repoge in. Who could repoge in Betsey Prig, arter her words of Mrs. Harris, setting in that chair afore my eyes!"

"Quite true," said John: "quite. I hope you have time to find another assistant, Mrs. Gamp?"

Between her indignation and the teapot, her powers of comprehending what was said to her began to fail. She looked at John with tearful eyes, and murmuring the well-remembered name which Mrs. Prig had challenged — as if it were a talisman against all earthly sorrows — seemed to wander in her mind.

"I hope," repeated John, "that you have time to find another assistant?"

"Which short it is, indeed," cried Mrs. Gamp, turning up her languid eyes, and clasping Mr. Westlock's wrist with matronly affection. "To-morrow evenin', sir, I waits upon his friends. Mr. Chuzzlewit apinted it from nine to ten."

"From nine to ten," said John, with a significant glance at Martin; "and then Mr. Chuffey retires into safe keeping, does he?"

"He needs to be kep' safe, I do assure you," Mrs. Gamp replied, with a mysterious air. "Other people besides me has had a happy deliverance from Betsey Prig. I little know'd that woman. She 'd have let it out!"

"Let *him* out, you mean," said John.

"Do I!" retorted Mrs. Gamp. "Oh!"

The severely ironical character of this reply, was strengthened by a very slow nod, and a still slower drawing down of the corners of Mrs. Gamp's mouth. She added with extreme stateliness of manner, after indulging in a short doze: —

"But I am a keepin' of you gentlemen, and time is precious."

Mingling with that delusion of the teapot which inspired her with the belief that they wanted her to go somewhere immediately, a shrewd avoidance of any further reference to the topics into which she had lately strayed, Mrs. Gamp rose; and putting away the teapot, in its accustomed place, and locking the cupboard with much gravity, proceeded to attire herself for a professional visit.

This preparation was easily made, as it required nothing more than the snuffy black bonnet, the snuffy black shawl, the pattens, and the indispensable umbrella, without which neither a lying-in nor a laying-out could by any possibility be attempted. When Mrs. Gamp had invested herself with these appendages she returned to her chair, and sitting down again, declared herself quite ready.

"It 's a 'appiness to know as one can benefit the poor sweet creetur," she observed, "I 'm sure. It is n't all as can. The torters Betsey Prig inflicts is frightful."

Closing her eyes as she made this remark, in the acuteness of her commiseration for Betsey's patients, she forgot to open them again until she dropped a patten. Her nap was also broken at intervals, like the fabled slumbers of Friar Bacon, by the dropping of the other patten, and of the umbrella; but when she had got rid of these incumbrances, her sleep was peaceful.

The two young men looked at each other, ludicrously enough; and Martin, stifling his disposition to laugh, whispered in John Westlock's ear: —

"What shall we do now?"

"Stay here," he replied.

Mrs. Gamp was heard to murmur "Mrs. Harris" in her sleep.

"Rely upon it," whispered John, looking cautiously towards her, "that you shall question this old clerk, though you go as Mrs. Harris herself. We know quite enough to carry her our own way now, at all events; thanks to this quarrel, which confirms the old saying that when rogues fall out honest people get what they want. Let Jonas Chuzzlewit look to himself; and let her sleep as long as she likes. We shall gain our end in good time."

CHAPTER L

SURPRISES TOM PINCH VERY MUCH, AND SHOWS HOW CERTAIN CONFIDENCES PASSED BETWEEN HIM AND HIS SISTER.

It was the next evening; and Tom and his sister were sitting together before tea, talking in their usual quiet way about a great many things, but not at all about Lewsome's story or anything connected with it; for John Westlock — really John, for so young a man, was one of the most considerate fellows in the world — had particularly advised Tom not to mention it to his sister just yet, in case it should disquiet her. "And I would n't, Tom," he said, with a little hesitation, "I would n't have a shadow on her happy face, or an uneasy thought in her gentle heart, for all the wealth and honours of the universe!" Really John was uncommonly kind; extraordinarily kind. If he had been her father, Tom said, he could not have taken a greater interest in her.

But although Tom and his sister were extremely conversational, they were less lively, and less cheerful, than usual. Tom had no idea that this originated with Ruth, but took it for granted that he was rather dull himself. In truth he was; for the lightest cloud upon the Heaven of her quiet mind cast its shadow upon Tom.

And there was a cloud on little Ruth that evening. Yes, indeed. When Tom was looking in another direction, her bright eyes, stealing on towards his face, would sparkle still more brightly than their custom was, and then grow dim. When Tom was silent, looking out upon the summer weather, she would sometimes make a hasty movement, as if she were about to throw herself upon his neck; then check the impulse, and when he looked round, show a laughing face, and speak to him very merrily. When she had anything to give Tom, or had any excuse for coming near him, she would flutter about him, and lay her bashful hand upon his shoulder, and not be willing to withdraw it; and would show by all such means

that there was something on her heart which in her great love she longed to say to him, but had not the courage to utter.

So they were sitting, she with her work before her, but not working, and Tom with his book beside him, but not reading, when Martin knocked at the door. Anticipating who it was, Tom went to open it; and he and Martin came back into the room together. Tom looked surprised, for in answer to his cordial greeting Martin had hardly spoken a word.

Ruth also saw that there was something strange in the manner of their visitor, and raised her eyes inquiringly to Tom's face, as if she were seeking an explanation there. Tom shook his head, and made the same mute appeal to Martin.

Martin did not sit down, but walked up to the window, and stood there, looking out. He turned round after a few moments to speak, but hastily averted his head again, without doing so.

"What has happened, Martin?" Tom anxiously inquired. "My dear fellow, what bad news do you bring?"

"Oh, Tom!" replied Martin, in a tone of deep reproach. "To hear you feign that interest in anything that happens to me hurts me even more than your ungenerous dealing."

"My ungenerous dealing! Martin! My —" Tom could say no more.

"How could you, Tom, how could you suffer me to thank you so fervently and sincerely for your friendship; and not tell me, like a man, that you had deserted me! Was it true, Tom? Was it honest? Was it worthy of what you used to be — of what I am sure you used to be — to tempt me, when you had turned against me, into pouring out my heart? Oh, Tom!"

His tone was one of such strong injury and yet of so much grief for the loss of a friend he had trusted in; it expressed such high past love for Tom, and so much sorrow and compassion for his supposed unworthiness; that Tom, for a moment, put his hand before his face, and had no more power of justifying himself than if he had been a monster of deceit and falsehood.

"I protest, as I must die," said Martin, "that I grieve over the loss of what I thought you; and have no anger in the recollection of my own injuries. It is only at such a time, and after such a discovery, that we know the full measure of our old regard for the subject of it. I swear, little as I

showed it; little as I know I showed it; that when I had the least consideration for you, Tom, I loved you like a brother."

Tom was composed by this time, and might have been the Spirit of Truth, in a homely dress — it very often wears a homely dress, thank God! — when he replied to him.

"Martin," he said, "I don't know what is in your mind, or who has abused it, or by what extraordinary means. But the means are false. There is no truth whatever in the impression under which you labour. It is a delusion from first to last: and I warn you that you will deeply regret the wrong you do me. I can honestly say that I have been true to you, and to myself. You will be very sorry for this. Indeed, you will be very sorry for it, Martin."

"I *am* sorry," returned Martin, shaking his head. "I think I never knew what it was to be sorry in my heart, until now."

"At least," said Tom, "if I had always been what you charged me with being now, and had never had a place in your regard, but had always been despised by you, and had always deserved it, you should tell me in what you have found me to be treacherous; and on what grounds you proceed. I do not entreat you, therefore, to give me that satisfaction as a favour, Martin; but I ask it of you as a right."

"My own eyes are my witnesses," returned Martin. "Am I to believe them?"

"No," said Tom calmly. "Not if they accuse me."

"Your own words. Your own manner," pursued Martin. "Am I to believe *them?*"

"No," replied Tom calmly. "Not if they accuse me. But they never have accused me. Whoever has perverted them to such a purpose, has wronged me, almost as cruelly"— his calmness rather failed him here — "as you have done."

"I came here," said Martin; "and I appeal to your good sister to hear me —"

"Not to her," interrupted Tom. "Pray, do not appeal to her. She will never believe you."

He drew her arm through his own, as he said it.

"*I* believe it, Tom!"

"No, no," cried Tom, "of course not. I said so. Why, tut, tut, tut. What a silly little thing you are!"

"I never meant," said Martin hastily, "to appeal to you

against your brother. Do not think me so unmanly and unkind. I merely appealed to you to hear my declaration that I came here for no purpose of reproach — I have not one reproach to vent — but in deep regret. You could not know in what bitterness of regret, unless you knew how often I have thought of Tom; how long in almost hopeless circumstances, I have looked forward to the better estimation of his friendship; and how steadfastly I have believed and trusted in him."

"Tut, tut," said Tom, stopping her as she was about to speak. "He is mistaken. He is deceived. Why should you mind? He is sure to be set right at last."

"Heaven bless the day that sets me right!" cried Martin, "if it could ever come!"

"Amen!" said Tom. "And it will!"

Martin paused; and then said in a still milder voice: —

"You have chosen for yourself, Tom, and will be relieved by our parting. It is not an angry one. There is no anger on my side — "

"There is none on mine," said Tom.

"— It is merely what you have brought about, and worked to bring about. I say again, you have chosen for yourself. You have made the choice that might have been expected in most people situated as you are, but which I did not expect in you. For that, perhaps, I should blame my own judgment more than you. There is wealth and favour worth having, on one side; and there is the worthless friendship of an abandoned, struggling fellow, on the other. You were free to make your election, and you made it; and the choice was not difficult. But those who have not the courage to resist such temptations, should have the courage to avow that they have yielded to them; and I *do* blame you for this, Tom: that you received me with a show of warmth, encouraged me to be frank and plain-spoken, tempted me to confide in you, and professed that you were able to be mine, when you had sold yourself to others. I do not believe," said Martin, with emotion — "hear me say it from my heart; I *cannot* believe, Tom, now that I am standing face to face with you — that it would have been in your nature to do me any serious harm, even though I had not discovered, by chance, in whose employment you were. But I should have encumbered you; I should have led you into more double-dealing; I should have hazarded your retaining the

favour for which you have paid so high a price, bartering away your former self; and it is best for both of us that I have found out what you so much desired to keep secret."

"Be just," said Tom; who had not removed his mild gaze from Martin's face since the commencement of this last address; "be just, even in your injustice, Martin. You forget. You have not yet told me what your accusation is!"

"Why should I?" returned Martin, waving his hand, and moving towards the door. "You could not know it the better for my dwelling on it, and though it would be really none the worse, it might seem to me to be. No, Tom. Bygones shall be bygones between us. I can take leave of you at this moment and in this place, in which you are so amiable and so good, as heartily, if not as cheerfully, as ever I have done since we first met. All good go with you, Tom! — I —"

"You leave me so? You can leave me so, can you?" said Tom.

"I — you — you have chosen for yourself, Tom! I — I hope it was a rash choice," Martin faltered. "I think it was. I am sure it was! Good-by!"

And he was gone.

Tom led his little sister to her chair, and sat down in his own. He took his book, and read, or seemed to read. Presently he said aloud, turning a leaf as he spoke, "He will be very sorry for this." And a tear stole down his face, and dropped upon the page.

Ruth nestled down beside him on her knees, and clasped her arms about his neck.

"No, Tom! No, no! Be comforted! Dear Tom!"

"I am quite — comforted," said Tom. "It will be set right."

"Such a cruel, bad return!" cried Ruth.

"No, no," said Tom. "He believes it. I cannot imagine why. But it will be set right."

More closely yet, she nestled down about him; and wept as if her heart would break.

"Don't — don't," said Tom. "Why do you hide your face, my dear?"

Then, in a burst of tears, it all broke out at last.

"Oh, Tom, dear Tom, I know your secret heart. I have found it out; you could n't hide the truth from me. Why

did n't you tell me? I am sure I could have made you happier, if you had! You love her, Tom, so dearly!"

Tom made a motion with his hand as if he would have put his sister hurriedly away; but it clasped upon hers, and all his little history was written in the action. All its pathetic eloquence was in the silent touch.

"In spite of that," said Ruth, "you have been so faithful and so good, dear; in spite of that, you have been so true and self-denying, and have struggled with yourself; in spite of that, you have been so gentle, and so kind, and even-tempered, that I have never seen you give a hasty look, or heard you say one irritable word. In spite of all, you have been so cruelly mistaken. Oh, Tom, dear Tom, will *this* be set right too! Will it, Tom? Will you always have this sorrow in your breast, you who deserve to be so happy, or is there any hope?"

And still she hid her face from Tom, and clasped him round the neck, and wept for him, and poured out all her woman's heart and soul in the relief and pain of this disclosure.

It was not very long before she and Tom were sitting side by side, and she was looking with an earnest quietness in Tom's face. Then Tom spoke to her thus; cheerily, though gravely.

"I am very glad, my dear, that this has passed between us. Not because it assures me of your tender affection (for I was well assured of that before), but because it relieves my mind of a great weight."

Tom's eyes glistened when he spoke of her affection; and he kissed her on the cheek.

"My dear girl," said Tom, "with whatever feeling I regard her" — they seemed to avoid the name by mutual consent — "I have long ago — I am sure I may say from the very first — looked upon it as a dream. As something that might possibly have happened under very different circumstances, but which can never be. Now tell me. What would you have set right?"

She gave Tom such a significant little look, that he was obliged to take it for an answer whether he would or no: and to go on.

"By her own choice and free consent, my love, she is betrothed to Martin; and was, long before either of them knew of my existence. You would have her betrothed to me?"

"Yes," she said directly.

"Yes," rejoined Tom, "but that might be setting it wr... instead of right. Do you think," said Tom, with a ... smile, "that even if she had never seen him, it is very l... she would have fallen in love with Me?"

"Why not, dear Tom?"

Tom shook his head, and smiled again.

"You think of me, Ruth," said Tom, "and it is ... natural that you should, as if I were a character in a ... and you make it a sort of poetical justice that I sh... some impossible means or other, come, at last, to marry person I love. But there is a much higher justice than ... ical justice, my dear, and it does not order events up... principle. Accordingly people who read about heroes in b... and choose to make heroes of themselves out of books, ... it a very fine thing to be discontented and gloomy, and mis... thropical, and perhaps a little blasphemous, because they can... have everything ordered for their individual accommodat... Would you like me to become one of that sort of people?"

"No, Tom. But still I know," she added timidly, "... this is a sorrow to you in your own better way."

Tom thought of disputing the position. But it w... been mere folly, and he gave it up.

"My dear," said Tom, "I will repay your affecti... the Truth, and all the Truth. It is a sorrow to me. I ha... proved it to be so sometimes, though I have always str... against it. But somebody who is precious to you may ... and you may dream that you are in heaven with the d... spirit, and you may find it a sorrow to wake to the ... earth which is no harder to be borne than when y... asleep. It is sorrowful to me to contemplate my dream, wh... I always knew was a dream, even when it first presented its... but the realities about me are not to blame. They are ... same as they were. My sister, my sweet companion, w... makes this place so dear, is she less devoted to me, Ruth, th... she would have been, if this vision had never troubled m... My old friend John, who might so easily have treated me w... coldness and neglect, is he less cordial to me? The w... about me, is there less good in that? Are my words to ... harsh and my looks to be sour, and is my heart to grow c... because there has fallen in my way a good and beautiful cre...

ture, who, but for the selfish regret that I cannot call her my own, would, like all other good and beautiful creatures, make me happier and better? No, my dear sister. No," said Tom stoutly. "Remembering all my means of happiness, I hardly dare to call this lurking something a sorrow; but whatever name it may justly bear, I thank Heaven that it renders me more sensible of affection and attachment, and softens me in fifty ways. Not less happy. Not less happy, Ruth!"

She could not speak to him, but she loved him as he well deserved. Even as he deserved she loved him.

"She will open Martin's eyes," said Tom, with a glow of pride, "and that (which is indeed wrong) will be set right. Nothing will persuade her, I know, that I have betrayed him. It will be set right through her, and he will be very sorry for it. Our secret, Ruth, is our own, and lives and dies with us. I don't believe I ever could have told it you," said Tom, with a smile, "but how glad I am to think you have found it out!"

They had never taken such a pleasant walk as they took that night. Tom told her all so freely, and so simply, and was so desirous to return her tenderness with his fullest confidence, that they prolonged it far beyond their usual hour, and sat up late when they came home. And when they parted for the night there was such a tranquil, beautiful expression in Tom's face that she could not bear to shut it out, but going back on tip-toe to his chamber-door, looked in, and stood there till he saw her, and then embracing him again, withdrew. And in her prayers, and in her sleep — good times to be remembered with such fervour, Tom! — his name was uppermost.

When he was left alone, Tom pondered very much on this discovery of hers, and greatly wondered what had led her to it. "Because," thought Tom, "I have been so very careful. It was foolish and unnecessary in me, as I clearly see now, when I am so relieved by her knowing it; but I have been so very careful to conceal it from her. Of course I knew that she was intelligent and quick, and for that reason was more upon my guard; but I was not in the least prepared for this. I am sure her discovery has been sudden too. Dear me!" said Tom. "It 's a most singular instance of penetration!"

Tom could not get it out of his head. There it was, when his head was on his pillow.

"How she trembled when she began to tell me she knew it!" thought Tom, recalling all the little incidents and circumstances; "and how her face flushed! But that was natural. Oh, quite natural! That needs no accounting for."

Tom little thought how natural it was. Tom little knew that there was that in Ruth's own heart, but newly set there, which had helped her to the reading of his mystery. Ah, Tom! He didn't understand the whispers of the Temple Fountain, though he passed it every day.

Who so lively and cheerful as busy Ruth next morning! Her early tap at Tom's door, and her light foot outside, would have been music to him though she had not spoken. But she said it was the brightest morning ever seen, and so it was; and if it had been otherwise, she would have made it so to Tom.

She was ready with his neat breakfast when he went down stairs, and had her bonnet ready for the early walk, and was so full of news that Tom was lost in wonder. She might have been up all night, collecting it for his entertainment. There was Mr. Nadgett not come home yet, and there was bread down a penny a loaf, and there was twice as much strength in this tea as in the last, and the milk-woman's husband had come out of the hospital cured, and the curly-headed child over the way had been lost all yesterday, and she was going to make all sorts of preserves in a desperate hurry, and there happened to be a saucepan in the house which was the very saucepan for the purpose; and she knew all about the last book Tom had brought home, all through, though it was a teaser to read; and she had so much to tell him that she had finished breakfast first. Then she had her little bonnet on, and the tea and sugar locked up, and the keys in her reticule, and the flower, as usual, in Tom's coat, and was in all respects quite ready to accompany him, before Tom knew she had begun to prepare. And in short, as Tom said, with a confidence in his own assertion, which amounted to a defiance of the public in general, there never was such a little woman.

She made Tom talkative. It was impossible to resist her. She put such enticing questions to him; about books, and about dates of churches, and about organs, and about the Temple, and about all kinds of things. Indeed, she lightened the way (and Tom's heart with it) to that degree, that the

Temple looked quite blank and solitary, when he parted from her at the gate.

"No Mr. Fips's friend to-day, I suppose," thought Tom, as he ascended the stairs.

Not yet, at any rate, for the door was closed as usual, and Tom opened it with his key. He had got the books into perfect order now, and had mended the torn leaves, and pasted up the broken backs, and substituted neat labels for the worn-out letterings. It looked a different place, it was so orderly and neat. Tom felt some pride in contemplating the change he had wrought, though there was no one to approve or disapprove of it.

He was at present occupied in making a fair copy of his draft of the catalogue; on which, as there was no hurry, he was painfully concentrating all the ingenious and laborious neatness he had ever expended on map or plan in Mr. Pecksniff's workroom. It was a very marvel of a catalogue; for Tom sometimes thought he was really getting his money too easily, and he had determined within himself that this document should take a little of his superfluous leisure out of him.

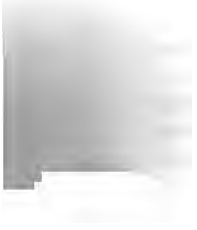
So, with pens and ruler, and compasses and india-rubber, and pencil, and black ink, and red ink, Tom worked away all the morning. He thought a good deal about Martin and their interview of yesterday, and would have been far easier in his mind if he could have resolved to confide it to his friend John, and to have taken his opinion on the subject. But besides that he knew what John's boiling indignation would be, he bethought himself that he was helping Martin now in a matter of great moment, and that to deprive the latter of his assistance at such a crisis of affairs, would be to inflict a serious injury upon him.

"So I 'll keep it to myself," said Tom, with a sigh. "I 'll keep it to myself."

And to work he went again, more assiduously than ever, with the pens, and the ruler, and the india-rubber, and the pencil, and the black ink, and the red ink, that he might forget it.

He had laboured away for another hour or more, when he heard a footstep in the entry, down below.

"Ah!" said Tom, looking towards the door, "time was, not long ago either, when that would have set me wondering and expecting. But I have left off now."



He stopped, even in the passion of his speech, if that can be called passion which was so resolute and steady, to press Tom's hand again. Then he said, in great excitement: —

"Close the door, close the door. He will not be long after me, but may come too soon. The time now drawing on," said the old man hurriedly, his eyes and whole face brightening as he spoke, "will make amends for all. I wouldn't have him die or hang himself for millions of golden pieces! Close the door."

Tom did so; hardly knowing yet whether he was awake or in a dream.

CHAPTER LI

SHEDS NEW AND BRIGHTER LIGHT UPON THE VERY DARK PLACE; AND CONTAINS THE SEQUEL OF THE ENTERPRISE OF MR. JONAS AND HIS FRIEND.

THE night had now come, when the old clerk was to be delivered over to his keepers. In the midst of his guilty distractions, Jonas had not forgotten it.

It was a part of his guilty state of mind to remember it; for on his persistence in the scheme depended one of his precautions for his own safety. A hint, a word, from the old man, uttered at such a moment in attentive ears, might fire the train of suspicion, and destroy him. His watchfulness of every avenue by which the discovery of his guilt might be approached, sharpened with his sense of the danger by which he was encompassed. With murder on his soul, and its innumerable alarms and terrors dragging at him night and day, he would have repeated the crime, if he had seen a path of safety stretching out beyond. It was in his punishment; it was in his guilty condition. The very deed which his fears rendered insupportable, his fears would have impelled him to commit again.

But keeping the old man close, according to his design, would serve his turn. His purpose was to escape, when the first alarm and wonder had subsided; and when he could make the attempt without awakening instant suspicion. In the mean while these women would keep him quiet; and if the talking humour came upon him, would not be easily startled. He knew their trade.

Nor had he spoken idly when he said the old man should be gagged. He had resolved to insure his silence; and he looked to the end, not the means. He had been rough and rude and cruel to the old man all his life; and violence was natural to his mind in connection with him. "He shall be gagged if he speaks, and pinioned if he writes," said Jonas,

looking at him; for they sat alone together. "He is mad enough for that; I 'll go through with it!"

Hush!

Still listening — to every sound! He had listened ever since, and it had not come yet. The exposure of the Insurance office; the flight of Crimple and Bullamy with the plunder, and among the rest, as he feared, with his own bill, which he had not found in the pocket-book of the murdered man, and which with Mr. Pecksniff's money had probably been remitted to one or other of those trusty friends for safe deposit at the banker's; his immense losses, and peril of being still called to account as a partner in the broken firm; all these things rose in his mind at one time and always, but he could not contemplate them. He was aware of their presence, and of the rage, discomfiture, and despair, they brought along with them; but he thought — of his own controlling power and direction he thought — of the one dread question only — when they would find the body in the wood.

He tried — he had never left off trying — not to forget it was there, for that was impossible, but to forget to weary himself by drawing vivid pictures of it in his fancy; by going softly about it and about it among the leaves, approaching it nearer and nearer through a gap in the boughs, and startling the very flies that were thickly sprinkled all over it, like heaps of dried currants. His mind was fixed and fastened on the discovery, for intelligence of which he listened intently to every cry and shout; listened when any one came in, or went out; watched from the window the people who passed up and down the street; and mistrusted his own looks and words. And the more his thoughts were set upon the discovery, the stronger was the fascination which attracted them to the thing itself, lying alone in the wood. He was for ever showing and presenting it, as it were, to every creature whom he saw. "Look here! Do you know of this? Is it found? Do you suspect *me?*" If he had been condemned to bear the body in his arms, and lay it down for recognition at the feet of every one he met, it could not have been more constantly with him, or a cause of more monotonous and dismal occupation than it was in this state of his mind.

Still he was not sorry. It was no contrition or remorse for what he had done that moved him; it was nothing but alarm

for his own security. The vague consciousness he possessed of having wrecked his fortune in the murderous venture intensified his hatred and revenge, and made him set the greater store by what he had gained. The man was dead; nothing could undo that. He felt a triumph yet in the reflection.

He had kept a jealous watch on Chuffey ever since the deed; seldom leaving him but on compulsion, and then for as short intervals as possible. They were alone together now. It was twilight, and the appointed time drew near at hand. Jonas walked up and down the room. The old man sat in his accustomed corner.

The slightest circumstance was matter of disquiet to the murderer, and he was made uneasy at this time by the absence of his wife, who had left home early in the afternoon, and had not returned yet. No tenderness for her was at the bottom of this; but he had a misgiving that she might have been waylaid, and tempted into saying something that would criminate him when the news came. For anything he knew, she might have knocked at the door of his room, while he was away, and discovered his plot. Confound her, it was like her pale face, to be wandering up and down the house! Where was she now?

"She went to her good friend, Mrs. Todgers," said the old man, when he asked the question with an angry oath.

Ay! to be sure! always stealing away into the company of that woman. She was no friend of his. Who could tell what devil's mischief they might hatch together! Let her be fetched home directly.

The old man, muttering some words softly, rose as if he would have gone himself, but Jonas thrust him back into his chair with an impatient imprecation, and sent a servant-girl to fetch her. When he had charged her with her errand he walked to and fro again, and never stopped till she came back, which she did pretty soon; the way being short, and the woman having made good haste.

Well! Where was she? Had she come?

No. She had left there, full three hours.

"Left there! Alone?"

The messenger had not asked; taking that for granted.

"Curse you for a fool. Bring candles!"

She had scarcely left the room, when the old clerk, who had

been unusually observant of him ever since he had asked about his wife, came suddenly upon him.

"Give her up!" cried the old man. "Come! Give her up to me! Tell me what you have done with her. Quick! I have made no promises on that score. Tell me what you have done with her."

He laid his hands upon his collar as he spoke, and grasped it tightly, too.

"You shall not leave me!" cried the old man. "I am strong enough to cry out to the neighbours, and I will, unless you give her up. Give her up to me!"

Jonas was so dismayed and conscience stricken that he had not even hardihood enough to unclench the old man's hands with his own; but stood looking at him as well as he could in the darkness, without moving a finger. It was as much as he could do to ask him what he meant.

"I will know what you have done with her!" retorted Chuffey. "If you hurt a hair of her head, you shall answer it. Poor thing! Poor thing! Where is she?"

"Why, you old madman!" said Jonas, in a low voice, and with trembling lips. "What Bedlam fit has come upon you now?"

"It is enough to make me mad, seeing what I have seen in this house!" cried Chuffey. "Where is my dear old master? Where is his only son that I have nursed upon my knee, a child? Where is she, she who was the last; she that I've seen pining day by day, and heard weeping in the dead of night? She was the last, the last of all my friends! Heaven help me, she was the very last!"

Seeing that the tears were stealing down his face, Jonas mustered courage to unclench his hands, and push him off, before he answered: —

"Did you hear me ask for her? Did you hear me send for her? How can I give you up what I haven't got, idiot? Fool, I'd give her up to you and welcome, if I could; and a precious pair you'd be!"

"If she has come to any harm," cried Chuffey — "mind! I'm old and silly; but I have my memory sometimes — and if she has come to any harm —"

"Devil take you," interrupted Jonas, but in a suppressed voice still; "what harm do you suppose she has come to? I

know no more where she is than you do; I wish I did. Wait till she comes home, and see: she can't be long. Will that content you?"

"Mind!" exclaimed the old man. "Not a hair of her head! not a hair of her head ill used! I won't bear it. I—I—have borne it too long, Jonas. I am silent, but I—I—I can speak. I—I—I can speak—" he stammered, as he crept back to his chair, and turned a threatening, though a feeble, look upon him.

"You can speak, can you!" thought Jonas. "So, so; we 'll stop your speaking. It 's well I knew of this in good time. Prevention is better than cure."

He had made a poor show of playing the bully and evincing a desire to conciliate at the same time, but was so afraid of the old man that great drops had started out upon his brow; and they stood there yet. His unusual tone of voice and agitated manner had sufficiently expressed his fear; but his face would have done so now, without that aid, as he again walked to and fro, glancing at him by the candle-light.

He stopped at the window to think. An opposite shop was lighted up; and the tradesman and a customer were reading some printed bill together across the counter. The sight brought him back, instantly, to the occupation he had forgotten. "Look here! Do you know of this? Is it found? Do you suspect *me?*"

A hand upon the door. "What 's that?"

"A pleasant evenin'," said the voice of Mrs. Gamp, "though warm, which, bless you, Mr. Chuzzlewit, we must expect when cowcumbers is three for twopence. How does Mr. Chuffey find his self to-night, sir?"

Mrs. Gamp kept particularly close to the door in saying this, and curtseyed more than usual. She did not appear to be quite so much at her ease as she generally was.

"Get him to his room," said Jonas, walking up to her, and speaking in her ear. "He has been raving to-night—stark mad. Don't talk while he 's here, but come down again."

"Poor sweet dear!" cried Mrs. Gamp, with uncommon tenderness. "He 's all of a tremble."

"Well he may be," said Jonas, "after the mad fit he has had. Get him up stairs."

She was by this time assisting him to rise.

"There 's my blessed old chick!" cried Mrs. Gamp, in a tone that was at once soothing and encouraging. "There 's my darlin' Mr. Chuffey! Now come up to your own room, sir, and lay down on your bed a bit; for you 're a shakin' all over, as if your precious jints was hung upon wires. That 's a good creetur! come with Sairey!"

"Is she come home?" inquired the old man.

"She 'll be here directly minnit," returned Mrs. Gamp. "Come with Sairey, Mr. Chuffey. Come with your own Sairey!"

The good woman had no reference to any female in the world in promising this speedy advent of the person for whom Mr. Chuffey inquired, but merely threw it out as a means of pacifying the old man. It had its effect, for he permitted her to lead him away; and they quitted the room together.

Jonas looked out of the window again. They were still reading the printed paper in the shop opposite, and a third man had joined in the perusal. What could it be, to interest them so?

A dispute or discussion seemed to arise among them, for they all looked up from their reading together, and one of the three, who had been glancing over the shoulder of another, stepped back to explain or illustrate some action by his gestures.

Horror! How like the blow he had struck in the wood!

It beat him from the window as if it had lighted on himself. As he staggered into a chair, he thought of the change in Mrs. Gamp, exhibited in her new-born tenderness to her charge. Was that because it was found? — because she knew of it? — because she suspected him?

"Mr. Chuffey is a lyin' down," said Mrs. Gamp returning, "and much good may it do him, Mr. Chuzzlewit, which harm it can't and good it may: be joyful!"

"Sit down," said Jonas hoarsely, "and let us get this business done. Where is the other woman?"

"The other person 's with him now," she answered.

"That 's right," said Jonas. "He is not fit to be left to himself. Why, he fastened on me to-night — here, upon my coat — like a savage dog. Old as he is, and feeble as he is usually, I had some trouble to shake him off. You — hush! — it 's nothing. You told me the other woman's name. I forget it."

"I mentioned Betsey Prig," said Mrs. Gamp.

"She is to be trusted, is she?"

"That she ain't!" said Mrs. Gamp; "nor have I brought her, Mr. Chuzzlewit. I've brought another, which engages to give every satigefaction."

"What is her name?" asked Jonas.

Mrs. Gamp looked at him in an odd way without returning any answer, but appeared to understand the question, too.

"What is her name?" repeated Jonas.

"Her name," said Mrs. Gamp, "is Harris."

It was extraordinary how much effort it cost Mrs. Gamp to pronounce the name she was commonly so ready with. She made some three or four gasps before she could get it out; and, when she had uttered it, pressed her hand upon her side, and turned up her eyes, as if she were going to faint away. But knowing her to labour under a complication of internal disorders, which rendered a few drops of spirits indispensable at certain times to her existence, and which came on very strong when that remedy was not at hand, Jonas merely supposed her to be the victim of one of these attacks.

"Well!" he said hastily, for he felt how incapable he was of confining his wandering attention to the subject. "You and she have arranged to take care of him, have you?"

Mrs. Gamp replied in the affirmative, and softly discharged herself of her familiar phrase, "Turn and turn about; one off, one on." But she spoke so tremulously that she felt called upon to add, "which fiddle-strings is weakness to expredge my nerves this night!"

Jonas stopped to listen; then said hurriedly: —

"We shall not quarrel about terms. Let them be the same as they were before. Keep him close, and keep him quiet. He must be restrained. He has got it in his head to-night that my wife's dead, and has been attacking me as if I had killed her. It's — it's common with mad people to take the worst fancies of those they like best; isn't it?"

Mrs. Gamp assented with a short groan.

"Keep him close, then, or in one of his fits he'll be doing me a mischief. And don't trust him at any time; for when he seems most rational, he's wildest in his talk. But that you know already. Let me see the other."

"The t'other person, sir?" said Mrs. Gamp.

"Ay! Go you to him and send the other. Quick! I'm busy."

Mrs. Gamp took two or three backward steps towards the door, and stopped there.

"It is your wishes, Mr. Chuzzlewit," she said, in a sort of quavering croak, "to see the t'other person, is it?"

But the ghastly change in Jonas told her that the other person was already seen. Before she could look round towards the door, she was put aside by old Martin's hand; and Chuffey and John Westlock entered with him.

"Let no one leave the house," said Martin. "This man is my brother's son. Ill-met, ill-trained, ill-begotten. If he moves from the spot on which he stands, or speaks a word above his breath to any person here, open the window, and call for help!"

"What right have you to give such directions in this house?" asked Jonas faintly.

"The right of your wrong-doing. Come in there!"

An irrepressible exclamation burst from the lips of Jonas, as Lewsome entered at the door. It was not a groan, or a shriek, or a word, but was wholly unlike any sound that had ever fallen on the ears of those who heard it, while at the same time it was the most sharp and terrible expression of what was working in his guilty breast that nature could have invented.

He had done murder for this! He had girdled himself about with perils, agonies of mind, innumerable fears, for this! He had hidden his secret in the wood; pressed and stamped it down into the bloody ground; and here it started up when least expected, miles upon miles away; known to many; proclaiming itself from the lips of an old man who had renewed his strength and vigour as by a miracle, to give it voice against him.

He leaned his hand on the back of a chair, and looked at them. It was in vain to try to do so scornfully, or with his usual insolence — he required the chair for his support — but he made a struggle for it.

"I know that fellow," he said, fetching his breath at every word, and pointing his trembling finger towards Lewsome. "He's the greatest liar alive. What's his last tale? Ha, ha! You're rare fellows, too! Why, that uncle of mine is childish; he's even a greater child than his brother, my

father, was, in his old age; or than Chuffey is. What devil do you mean," he added, looking fiercely at J lock and Mark Tapley (the latter had entered with Lewsome "by coming here, and bringing two idiots and a knave you to take my house by storm. Halloa, there! door! Turn these strangers out!"

"I tell you what," cried Mr. Tapley, coming forward, it wasn't for your name, I'd drag you through the street my own accord, and single-handed, I would! Ah, I Don't try and look bold at me. You can't do it! N on, sir," this was to old Martin. "Bring the murderer bond upon his knees! If he wants noise, he shall have of it; for as sure as he's a shiverin' from head to foot, raise a uproar at this winder that shall bring half Lon Go on, sir! Let him try me once, and see whether I man of my word or not."

With that, Mark folded his arms, and took his seat the window ledge, with an air of general preparation for thing, which seemed to imply that he was equally re jump out himself, or to throw Jonas out, upon receiving slightest hint that it would be agreeable to the company

Old Martin turned to Lewsome: —

"This is the man," he said, extending his hand to Jonas; "is it?"

"You need do no more than look at him to be sure of or of the truth of what I have said," was the reply. "H my witness."

"Oh, brother!" cried old Martin, clasping his hands lifting up his eyes. "Oh, brother, brother! Were strangers half our lives that you might breed a wretch this, and I make life a desert by withering every flower grew about me! Is it the natural end of your precepts name that this should be the creature of your rearing: ing, teaching, hoarding, striving for; and I the means bringing him to punishment, when nothing can repair wasted past!"

He sat down upon a chair as he spoke, and, turning awa face, was silent for a few moments. Then with re energy he proceeded. —

"But the accursed harvest of our mistaken lives sh trodden down. It is not too late for that. You are

fronted with this man, yon monster there; not to be spared, but to be dealt with justly. Hear what he says! Reply, be silent, contradict, repeat, defy, do what you please. My course shall be the same. Go on! And you," he said to Chuffey, "for the love of your old friend, speak out, good fellow!"

"I have been silent for his love!" cried the old man. "He urged me to it. He made me promise it, upon his dying bed. I never would have spoken, but for your finding out so much. I have thought about it ever since — I could n't help that; and sometimes I have had it all before me in a dream: but in the daytime, not in sleep. Is there such a kind of dream?" said Chuffey, looking anxiously in old Martin's face.

As Martin made him an encouraging reply, he listened attentively to his voice, and smiled.

"Ah, ay!" he cried. "He often spoke to me like that. We were at school together, he and I. I could n't turn against his son, you know — his only son, Mr. Chuzzlewit!"

"I would to heaven you had been his son!" said Martin.

"You speak so like my dear old master," cried the old man with a childish delight, "that I almost think I hear him. I can hear you quite as well as I used to hear him. It makes me young again. He never spoke unkindly to me, and I always understood him. I could always see him, too, though my sight was dim. Well, well! He 's dead, he 's dead. He was very good to me, my dear old master!"

He shook his head mournfully over the brother's hand. At this moment Mark, who had been glancing out of the window, left the room.

"I could n't turn against his only son, you know," said Chuffey. "He has nearly driven me to do it sometimes: he very nearly did to-night. Ah!" cried the old man, with a sudden recollection of the cause. "Where is she? She 's not come home!"

"Do you mean his wife?" said Mr. Chuzzlewit.

"Yes."

"I have removed her. She is in my care, and will be spared the present knowledge of what is passing here. She has known misery enough, without that addition."

Jonas heard this with a sinking heart. He knew that they were on his heels, and felt that they were resolute to run him

to destruction. Inch by inch the ground beneath him was sliding from his feet; faster and faster the encircling ruin contracted and contracted towards himself, its wicked centre, until it should close in and crush him.

And now he heard the voice of his accomplice stating to his face, with every circumstance of time and place and incident, and openly proclaiming, with no reserve, suppression, passion, or concealment, all the truth. The truth, which nothing would keep down; which blood would not smother, and earth would not hide; the truth, whose terrible inspiration seemed to change dotards into strong men; and on whose avenging wings, one whom he had supposed to be at the extremest corner of the earth came swooping down upon him.

He tried to deny it, but his tongue would not move. He conceived some desperate thought of rushing away, and tearing through the streets; but his limbs would as little answer to his will as his stark, stiff, staring face. All this time the voice went slowly on, denouncing him. It was as if every drop of blood in the wood had found a voice to jeer him with.

When it ceased, another voice took up the tale, but strangely; for the old clerk, who had watched, and listened to the whole, and had wrung his hands from time to time, as if he knew its truth and could confirm it, broke in with these words: —

"No, no, no! you're wrong; you're wrong — all wrong together! Have patience, for the truth is only known to me!"

"How can that be," said his old master's brother, "after what you have heard? Besides, you said just now, above stairs, when I told you of the accusation against him, that you knew he was his father's murderer."

"Ay, yes! and so he was!" cried Chuffey wildly. "But not as you suppose — not as you suppose. Stay! Give me a moment's time. I have it all here — all here! It was foul, foul, cruel, bad; but not as you suppose. Stay, stay!"

He put his hands up to his head, as if it throbbed or pained him. After looking about him in a wandering and vacant manner for some moments, his eyes rested upon Jonas, when they kindled up with sudden recollection and intelligence.

"Yes!" cried old Chuffey, "yes! that's how it was. It's all upon me now. He — he got up from his bed before he died, to be sure, to say that he forgave him; and he came down with me into this room; and when he saw him — his only son,

the son he loved — his speech forsook him: he had no speech for what he knew — and no one understood him except me. But I did — I did!"

Old Martin regarded him in amazement; so did his companions. Mrs. Gamp, who had said nothing yet, but had kept two thirds of herself behind the door, ready for escape, and one third in the room, ready for siding with the strongest party, came a little farther in, and remarked, with a sob, that Mr. Chuffey was "the sweetest old creetur goin'."

"He bought the stuff," said Chuffey, stretching out his arm towards Jonas, while an unwonted fire shone in his eye, and lightened up his face; "he bought the stuff, no doubt, as you have heard, and brought it home. He mixed the stuff — look at him! — with some sweetmeat in a jar, exactly as the medicine for his father's cough was mixed, and put it in a drawer; in that drawer yonder; in the desk; he knows which drawer I mean! He kept it there locked up. But his courage failed him, or his heart was touched — my God! I hope it was his heart! He was his only son! — and he did not put it in the usual place, where my old master would have taken it twenty times a day."

The trembling figure of the old man shook with the strong emotions that possessed him. But with the same light in his eye, and with his arm outstretched, and with his grey hair stirring on his head, he seemed to grow in size, and was like a man inspired. Jonas shrunk from looking at him, and cowered down into the chair by which he had held. It seemed as if this tremendous Truth could make the dumb speak.

"I know it every word now!" cried Chuffey. "Every word! He put it in that drawer, as I have said. He went so often there, and was so secret, that his father took notice of it; and when he was out, had it opened. We were there together, and we found the mixture — Mr. Chuzzlewit and I. He took it into his possession, and made light of it at the time; but in the night he came to my bedside, weeping, and told me that his own son had it in his mind to poison him. 'Oh, Chuff!' he said, 'oh, dear old Chuff! a voice came into my room tonight, and told me that this crime began with me. It began when I taught him to be too covetous of what I have to leave, and made the expectation of it his great business!' Those were his words; ay, they are his very words! If he was a hard

man now and then, it was for his only son. He loved his only son, and he was always good to me!"

Jonas listened with increased attention. Hope was breaking in upon him.

"'He shall not weary for my death, Chuff:' that was what he said next," pursued the old clerk, as he wiped his eyes; "that was what he said next, crying like a little child: 'He shall not weary for my death, Chuff. He shall have it now; he shall marry where he has a fancy, Chuff, although it don't please me; and you and I will go away and live upon a little. I always loved him; perhaps he 'll love *me* then. It 's a dreadful thing to have my own child thirsting for my death. But I might have known it. I have sown, and I must reap. He shall believe that I am taking this; and when I see that he is sorry, and has all he wants, I 'll tell him that I found it out, and I 'll forgive him. He 'll make a better man of his own son, and be a better man himself, perhaps, Chuff!'"

Poor Chuffey paused to dry his eyes again. Old Martin's face was hidden in his hands. Jonas listened still more keenly, and his breast heaved like a swollen water, but with hope — with growing hope.

"My dear old master made believe next day," said Chuffey, "that he had opened the drawer by mistake with a key from the bunch, which happened to fit it (we had one made and hung upon it); and that he had been surprised to find his fresh supply of cough medicine in such a place, but supposed it had been put there in a hurry when the drawer stood open. We burnt it; but his son believed that he was taking it — he knows he did. Once Mr. Chuzzlewit, to try him, took heart to say it had a strange taste; and he got up directly, and went out."

Jonas gave a short, dry cough; and changing his position for an easier one, folded his arms without looking at them, though they could now see his face.

"Mr. Chuzzlewit wrote to her father — I mean the father of the poor thing who 's his wife," said Chuffey — "and got him to come up, intending to hasten on the marriage. But his mind, like mine, went a little wrong through grief, and then his heart broke. He sank and altered from the time when he came to me in the night, and never held up his head again. It was only a few days, but he had never changed so much in twice the years. 'Spare him, Chuff!' he said, before he died.

They were the only words he could speak. 'Spare him, Chuff!' I promised him I would. I 've tried to do it. He 's his only son."

In his recollection of the last scene in his old friend's life, poor Chuffey's voice, which had grown weaker and weaker, quite deserted him. Making a motion with his hand, as if he would have said that Anthony had taken it, and had died with it in his, he retreated to the corner where he usually concealed his sorrows; and was silent.

Jonas could look at his company now, and vauntingly, too. "Well," he said, after a pause, "are you satisfied? Or have you any more of your plots to broach? Why that fellow Lewsome can invent 'em for you by the score. Is this all? Have you nothing else?"

Old Martin looked at him steadily.

"Whether you are what you seemed to be at Pecksniff's, or are something else and a mountebank, I don't know and I don't care," said Jonas, looking downward with a smile, "but I don't want you here. You were here so often when your brother was alive, and were always so fond of him (your dear, dear brother and you would have been cuffing one another before this, ecod!), that I 'm not surprised at your being attached to the place; but the place is not attached to you, and you can't leave it too soon, though you may leave it too late. And for my wife, old man, send her home straight, or it will be the worse for her. Ha, ha! You carry it with a high hand, too! But it is n't hanging yet for a man to keep a penn'orth of poison for his own purposes, and have it taken from him by two old crazy jolter-heads who go and act a play about it. Ha, ha! Do you see the door?"

His base triumph, struggling with his cowardice, and shame, and guilt, was so detestable, that they turned away from him, as if he were some obscene and filthy animal, repugnant to the sight. And here that last black crime was busy with him, too; working within him to his perdition. But for that, the old clerk's story might have touched him, though never so lightly; but for that, the sudden removal of so great a load might have brought about some wholesome change even in him. With that deed done, however, with that unnecessary wasteful danger haunting him, despair was in his very triumph and relief: wild, ungovernable, raging despair for the uselessness of the peril into

which he had plunged; despair that hardened him and maddened him, and set his teeth a grinding in a moment of his exultation.

"My good friend!" said Martin, laying his hand on Chuffey's sleeve. "This is no place for you to remain in. Come with me."

"Just his old way!" cried Chuffey, looking up into his face. "I almost believe it's Mr. Chuzzlewit alive again. Yes! Take me with you! Stay, though, stay."

"For what?" asked Martin.

"I can't leave her, poor thing!" said Chuffey. "She has been very good to me. I can't leave her, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Thank you kindly. I'll remain here. I haven't long to remain; it's no great matter."

As he meekly shook his poor, grey head, and thanked old Martin in these words, Mrs. Gamp, now entirely in the room, was affected to tears.

"The mercy as it is!" she said, "as sech a dear, good, reverend creetur never got into the clutches of Betsey Prig, which but for me he would have done, undoubted; facts bein' stubborn and not easy drove!"

"You heard me speak to you just now, old man," said Jonas to his uncle. "I'll have no more tampering with my people, man or woman. Do you see the door?"

"Do *you* see the door?" returned the voice of Mark, coming from that direction. "Look at it!"

He looked, and his gaze was nailed there. Fatal, ill-omened, blighted, threshold, cursed by his father's footsteps in his dying hour, cursed by his young wife's sorrowing tread, cursed by the daily shadow of the old clerk's figure, cursed by the crossing of his murderer's feet — what men were standing in the doorway!

Nadgett foremost.

Hark! It came on roaring like a sea! Hawkers burst into the street, crying it up and down; windows were thrown open that the inhabitants might hear it; people stopped to listen in the road and on the pavement; the bells, the same bells began to ring, tumbling over one another in a dance of boisterous joy at the discovery (that was the sound they had in his distempered thoughts), and making their airy playground rock.

"That is the man," said Nadgett; "by the window!"

Three others came in, laid hands upon him, and secured him. It was so quickly done that he had not lost sight of the informer's face for an instant when his wrists were manacled together.

"Murder," said Nadgett, looking round on the astonished group. "Let no one interfere."

The sounding street repeated Murder. Barbarous and dreadful Murder; Murder, Murder, Murder. Rolling on from house to house, and echoing from stone to stone, until the voices died away into the distant hum, which seemed to mutter the same word.

They all stood silent: listening, and gazing in each other's faces, as the noise passed on.

Martin was the first to speak. "What terrible history is this?" he demanded.

"Ask *him*," said Nadgett. "You 're his friend, sir. He can tell you, if he will. He knows more of it than I do, though I know much."

"How do you know much?"

"I have not been watching him so long for nothing," returned Nadgett. "I never watched a man so close as I have watched him."

Another of the phantom forms of this terrific Truth! Another of the many shapes in which it started up about him, out of vacancy. This man, of all men in the world, a spy upon him; this man, changing his identity, casting off his shrinking, purblind, unobservant character, and springing up into a watchful enemy! The dead man might have come out of his grave, and not confounded and appalled him so.

The game was up. The race was at an end; the rope was woven for his neck. If by a miracle he could escape from this strait, he had but to turn his face another way, no matter where, and there would rise some new avenger front to front with him; some infant in an hour grown old, or old man in an hour grown young, or blind man with his sight restored, or deaf man with his hearing given him. There was no chance. He sank down in a heap against the wall, and never hoped again from that moment.

"I am not his friend, although I have the dishonour to be his relative," said Mr. Chuzzlewit. "You may speak to me. Where have you watched, and what have you seen?"

"I have watched in many places," returned Nadgett: and day. I have watched him lately, almost with relief:" his anxious face and bloodshot eyes confirmed it little thought to what my watching was to lead — as he did when he slipped out in the night, dressed in the which he afterwards sunk in a bundle at London Br

Jonas moved upon the ground like a man in last He uttered a suppressed groan, as if he had been some cruel weapon; and plucked at the iron band wrists, as though (his hands being free) he would have himself.

"Steady, kinsman!" said the chief officer of the pa "Don't be violent."

"Whom do you call kinsman?" asked old Martin ster

"You," said the man, "among others."

Martin turned his scrutinising gaze upon him. He sitting lazily across a chair with his arms resting on the eating nuts, and throwing the shells out of window as cracked them, which he still continued to do, while spea

"Ay," he said, with a sulky nod. "You may deny nephews till you die; but Chevy Slyme is Chevy Slyme all the world over. Perhaps even you may feel it some grace to your own blood to be employed in this way. I be bought off."

"At every turn?" cried Martin. "Self, self, self! E one among them for himself!"

"You had better save one or two among them the tro then, and be for them as well as *yourself*," replied his "Look here at me! Can you see the man of your fam who has more talent in his little finger than all the rest united brains, dressed as a police officer without be ashamed? I took up with this trade on purpose to shame I didn't think I should have to make a capture in the fa though."

"If your debauchery, and that of your chosen friends really brought you to this level," returned the old man, it. You are living honestly, I hope, and that's something

"Don't be hard upon my chosen friends," returned Sl "for they were sometimes your chosen friends, too. Ha you never employed my friend Tigg, for I know better. W quarrelled upon it."

"I hired the fellow," retorted Mr. Chuzzlewit, "and I paid him."

"It 's well you paid him," said his nephew, "for it would be too late to do so now. He has given his receipt in full: or had it forced from him rather."

The old man looked at him as if he were curious to know what he meant, but scorned to prolong their conversation.

"I have always expected that he and I would be brought together again in the course of business," said Slyme, taking a fresh handful of nuts from his pocket, "but I thought he would be wanted for some swindling job: it never entered my head that I should hold a warrant for the apprehension of his murderer."

"*His* murderer!" cried Mr. Chuzzlewit, looking from one to another.

"His or Mr. Montague's," said Nadgett. "They are the same, I am told. I accuse him yonder of the murder of Mr. Montague, who was found last night, killed, in a wood. You will ask me why I accuse him, as you have already asked me how I know so much. I 'll tell you. It can't remain a secret long."

The ruling passion of the man expressed itself even then, in the tone of regret in which he deplored the approaching publicity of what he knew.

"I told you I had watched him," he proceeded. "I was instructed to do so by Mr. Montague, in whose employment I have been for some time. We had our suspicions of him; and you know what they pointed at, for you have been discussing it since we have been waiting here, outside the room. If you care to hear, now it 's all over, in what our suspicions began, I 'll tell you plainly: in a quarrel (it first came to our ears through a hint of his own) between him and another office in which his father's life was insured, and which had so much doubt and distrust upon the subject that he compounded with them, and took half the money; and was glad to do it. Bit by bit, I ferreted out more circumstances against him, and not a few. It required a little patience; but it 's my calling. I found the nurse — here she is to confirm me; I found the doctor, I found the undertaker, I found the undertaker's man. I found out how the old gentleman there, Mr. Chuffey, had behaved at the funeral; and I found out what this man,"

touching Lewsome on the arm, "had talked about in his fever. I found out how he conducted himself before his father's death, and how since, and how at the time; and writing it all down, and putting it carefully together, made case enough for Mr. Montague to tax him with the crime, which (as he himself believed until to-night) he had committed. I was by when this was done. You see him now. He is only worse than he was then."

Oh, miserable, miserable fool! oh, insupportable, excruciating torture! To find alive and active — a party to it all — the brain and right-hand of the secret he had thought to crush! In whom, though he had walled the murdered man up, by enchantment in a rock, the story would have lived and walked abroad! He tried to stop his ears with his fettered arms, that he might shut out the rest.

As he crouched upon the floor, they drew away from him as if a pestilence were in his breath. They fell off, one by one, from that part of the room, leaving him alone upon the ground. Even those who had him in their keeping shunned him, and (with the exception of Slyme, who was still occupied with his nuts) kept apart.

"From that garret-window opposite," said Nadgett, pointing across the narrow street, "I have watched this house and him for days and nights. From that garret-window opposite I saw him return home, alone, from a journey on which he had set out with Mr. Montague. That was my token that Mr. Montague's end was gained; and I might rest easy on my watch, though I was not to leave it until he dismissed me. But, standing at the door opposite, after dark that same night, I saw a countryman steal out of this house, by a side-door in the court, who had never entered it. I knew his walk, and that it was himself, disguised. I followed him immediately. I lost him on the western road, still travelling westward."

Jonas looked up at him for an instant and muttered an oath.

"I could not comprehend what this meant," said Nadgett; "but, having seen so much, I resolved to see it out, and through. And I did. Learning, on inquiry at his house from his wife, that he was supposed to be sleeping in the room from which I had seen him go out, and that he had given strict orders not to be disturbed, I knew that he was coming back; and for his coming back I watched. I kept my watch in the

street — in doorways, and such places — all that night; at the same window, all next day; and when night came on again, in the street once more. For I knew he would come back, as he had gone out, when this part of the town was empty. He did. Early in the morning, the same countryman came creeping, creeping, creeping home."

"Look sharp!" interposed Slyme, who had now finished his nuts. "This is quite irregular, Mr. Nadgett."

"I kept at the window all day," said Nadgett, without heeding him. "I think I never closed my eyes. At night, I saw him come out with a bundle. I followed him again. He went down the steps at London Bridge, and sunk it in the river. I now began to entertain some serious fears, and made a communication to the Police, which caused that bundle to be — "

"To be fished up," interrupted Slyme. "Be alive, Mr. Nadgett."

"It contained the dress I had seen him wear," said Nadgett; "stained with clay, and spotted with blood. Information of the murder was received in town last night. The wearer of that dress is already known to have been seen near the place; to have been lurking in that neighbourhood; and to have alighted from a coach coming from that part of the country, at a time exactly tallying with the very minute when I saw him returning home. The warrant has been out, and these officers have been with me some hours. We chose our time; and seeing you come in, and seeing this person at the window — "

"Beckoned to him," said Mark, taking up the thread of the narrative, on hearing this allusion to himself, "to open the door; which he did with a deal of pleasure."

"That 's all at present," said Nadgett, putting up his great pocket-book, which from mere habit he had produced when he began his revelation, and had kept in his hand all the time; "but there is plenty more to come. You asked me for the facts so far; I have related them, and need not detain these gentlemen any longer. Are you ready, Mr. Slyme?"

"And something more," replied that worthy, rising. "If you walk round to the office, we shall be there as soon as you. Tom! Get a coach!"

The officer to whom he spoke departed for that purpose. Old Martin lingered for a few moments, as if he would have addressed some words to Jonas; but looking round, and seeing

him still seated on the floor, rocking himself in a savage manner to and fro, took Chuffey's arm, and slowly followed Nadgett out. John Westlock and Mark Tapley accompanied them. Mrs. Gamp had tottered out first, for the better display of her feelings, in a kind of walking swoon; for Mrs. Gamp performed swoons of different sorts, upon a moderate notice, as Mr. Mould did Funerals.

"Ha!" muttered Slyme, looking after them. "Upon my soul! As insensible of being disgraced by having such a nephew as myself, in such a situation, as he was of my being an honour and a credit to the family! That 's the return I get for having humbled my spirit — such a spirit as mine — to earn a livelihood, is it?"

He got up from his chair, and kicked it away indignantly.

"And such a livelihood, too! When there are hundreds of men, not fit to hold a candle to me, rolling in carriages and living on their fortunes. Upon my soul, it 's a nice world!"

His eyes encountered Jonas, who looked earnestly towards him, and moved his lips as if he were whispering.

"Eh?" said Slyme.

Jonas glanced at the attendant whose back was towards him, and made a clumsy motion with his bound hands toward the door.

"Humph!" said Slyme thoughtfully. "I could n't hope to disgrace him into anything when you have shot so far ahead of me, though. I forgot that."

Jonas repeated the same look and gesture.

"Jack!" said Slyme.

"Hallo!" returned his man.

"Go down to the door, ready for the coach. Call out when it comes. I 'd rather have you there. Now, then," he added, turning hastily to Jonas, when the man was gone. "What 's the matter?"

Jonas essayed to rise.

"Stop a bit," said Slyme. "It 's not so easy when your wrists are tight together. Now, then! Up! What is it?"

"Put your hand in my pocket, — here; — the breast-pocket, on the left!" said Jonas.

He did so; and drew out a purse.

"There 's a hundred pound in it," said Jonas, whose words were almost unintelligible; as his face, in its pallor and agony, was scarcely human.

Slyme looked at him; gave it into his hands; and shook his head.

"I can't. I dare n't. I could n't if I dared. Those fellows below —"

"Escape 's impossible," said Jonas. "I know it. One hundred pound for only five minutes in the next room!"

"What to do?" he asked.

The face of his prisoner as he advanced to whisper in his ear made him recoil involuntarily. But he stopped and listened to him. The words were few, but his own face changed as he heard them.

"I have it about me," said Jonas, putting his hands to his throat, as though whatever he referred to were hidden in his neckerchief. "How should you know of it? How could you know? A hundred pound for only five minutes in the next room! The time 's passing. Speak!"

"It would be more — more creditable to the family," observed Slyme, with trembling lips. "I wish you had n't told me half so much. Less would have served your purpose. You might have kept it to yourself."

"A hundred pound for only five minutes in the next room! Speak!" cried Jonas desperately.

He took the purse. Jonas, with a wild, unsteady step, retreated to the door in the glass partition.

"Stop!" cried Slyme, catching at his skirts. "I don't know about this. Yet it must end so at last. Are you guilty?"

"Yes!" said Jonas.

"Are the proofs as they were told just now?"

"Yes!" said Jonas.

"Will you — will you engage to say a — a Prayer, or something of that sort?" faltered Slyme.

Jonas broke from him without replying, and closed the door between them.

Slyme listened at the keyhole. After that, he crept away on tiptoe, as far off as he could; and looked awfully towards the place. He was roused by the arrival of the coach, and their letting down the steps.

"He 's getting a few things together," he said, leaning out of window, and speaking to the two men below, who stood in the full light of a street-lamp. "Keep your eye upon the back, one of you, for form's sake."

One of the men withdrew into the court. The other, seating himself on the steps of the coach, remained in conversation with Slyme at the window; who perhaps had risen to be his superior, in virtue of his old propensity (one so much lauded by the murdered man) of being always round the corner — a useful habit in his present calling.

"Where is he?" asked the man.

Slyme looked into the room for an instant, and gave his head a jerk as much as to say, "Close at hand. I see him."

"He 's booked," observed the man.

"Through," said Slyme.

They looked at each other, and up and down the street. The man on the coach-steps took his hat off, and put it on again, and whistled a little.

"I say! he 's taking his time!" he remonstrated.

"I allowed him five minutes," said Slyme. "Time 's more than up, though. I 'll bring him down."

He withdrew from the window accordingly, and walked on tiptoe to the door in the partition. He listened. There was not a sound within. He set the candles near it, that they might shine through the glass.

It was not easy, he found, to make up his mind to the opening of the door. But he flung it wide open suddenly, and with a noise; then retreated. After peeping in and listening again, he entered.

He started back as his eyes met those of Jonas, standing in an angle of the wall, and staring at him. His neckerchief was off; his face was ashy pale.

"You 're too soon," said Jonas, with an abject whimper. "I 've not had time. I have not been able to do it. I — five minutes more — two minutes more! — only one!"

Slyme gave him no reply, but thrusting the purse upon him and forcing it back into his pocket, called up his men.

He whined, and cried, and cursed, and entreated them, and struggled, and submitted, in the same breath, and had no power to stand. But they got him away and into the coach, where they put him on a seat; but he soon fell moaning down among the straw at the bottom, and lay there.

The two men were with him; Slyme being on the box with the driver; and they let him lie. Happening to pass a fruiterer's on their way, the door of which was open, though the

shop was by this time shut, one of them remarked how faint the peaches smelt.

The other assented at the moment, but presently stooped down in quick alarm, and looked at the prisoner.

"Stop the coach! He has poisoned himself! The smell comes from this bottle in his hand!"

The hand had shut upon it tight, with that rigidity of grasp with which no living man, in the full strength and energy of life, can clutch a prize he has won.

They dragged him out into the dark street; but jury, judge, and hangman could have done no more, and could do nothing now. Dead, dead, dead.

CHAPTER LII

IN WHICH THE TABLES ARE TURNED COMPLETELY UPSIDE DOWN.

OLD MARTIN'S cherished projects, so long hidden in his own breast, so frequently in danger of abrupt disclosure through the bursting forth of the indignation he had hoarded up during his residence with Mr. Pecksniff, were retarded, but not beyond a few hours, by the occurrences just now related. Stunned, as he had been at first by the intelligence conveyed to him through Tom Pinch and John Westlock of the supposed manner of his brother's death; overwhelmed as he was by the subsequent narratives of Chuffey and Nadgett, and the forging of that chain of circumstances ending in the death of Jonas, of which catastrophe he was immediately informed; scattered as his purposes and hopes were for the moment by the crowding in of all these incidents between him and his end; still their very intensity and the tumult of their assemblage nerved him to the rapid and unyielding execution of his scheme. In every single circumstance, whether it were cruel, cowardly, or false, he saw the flowering of the same pregnant seed. Self—grasping, eager, narrow-ranging, over-reaching self, with its long train of suspicions, lusts, deceits, and all their growing consequences—was the root of the vile tree. Mr. Pecksniff had so presented his character before the old man's eyes that he—the good, the tolerant, enduring Pecksniff—had become the incarnation of all selfishness and treachery; and the more odious the shapes in which those vices ranged themselves before him now, the sterner consolation he had in his design of setting Mr. Pecksniff right, and Mr. Pecksniff's victims, too.

To this work he brought, not only the energy and determination natural to his character (which, as the reader may have observed in the beginning of his or her acquaintance with this gentleman, was remarkable for the strong development of those qualities), but all the forced and unnaturally nurtured energy consequent upon their long suppression. And these two tides

of resolution, setting into one and sweeping on, became so strong and vigorous that, to prevent themselves from being carried away before it, Heaven knows where, was as much as John Westlock and Mark Tapley together (though they were considerably energetic too) could manage to effect.

He had sent for John Westlock immediately on his arrival; and John, under the conduct of Tom Pinch, had waited on him. Having a lively recollection of Mr. Tapley, he had caused that gentleman's attendance to be secured, through John's means, without delay; and thus, as we have seen, they had all repaired, together, to the city. But his grandson he had refused to see until to-morrow, when Mr. Tapley was instructed to summon him to the Temple at ten o'clock in the forenoon. Tom he would not allow to be employed in anything, lest he should be wrongfully suspected; but he was a party to all their proceedings, and was with them until late at night — until after they knew of the death of Jonas; when he went home to tell all these wonders to little Ruth, and to prepare her for accompanying him to the Temple in the morning, agreeably to Mr. Chuzzlewit's particular injunction.

It was characteristic of old Martin, and his looking on to something which he had distinctly before him, that he communicated to them nothing of his intentions, beyond such hints of reprisal on Mr. Pecksniff as they gathered from the game he had played in that gentleman's house, and the brightening of his eyes whenever his name was mentioned. Even to John Westlock, in whom he was evidently disposed to place great confidence (which may, indeed, be said of every one of them), he gave no explanation whatever. He merely requested him to return in the morning; and with this for their utmost satisfaction, they left him, when the night was far advanced, alone.

The events of such a day might have worn out the body and spirit of a much younger man than he, but he sat in deep and painful meditation until the morning was bright. Nor did he even then seek any prolonged repose, but merely slumbered in his chair, until seven o'clock, when Mr. Tapley had appointed to come to him by his desire; and came — as fresh and clean and cheerful as the morning itself.

"You are punctual," said Mr. Chuzzlewit, opening the door to him in reply to his light knock, which had roused him instantly.

"My wishes, sir," replied Mr. Tapley, whose mind would appear from the context to have been running on the matrimonial service, "is to love, honour, and obey. The clock 's a striking now, sir."

"Come in!"

"Thankee, sir," rejoined Mr. Tapley, "what could I do for you first, sir?"

"You gave my message to Martin?" said the old man, bending his eyes upon him.

"I did, sir," returned Mark; "and you never see a gentleman more surprised in all your born days than he was."

"What more did you tell him?" Mr. Chuzzlewit inquired.

"Why, sir," said Mr. Tapley, smiling, "I should have liked to tell him a deal more, but not being able, sir, I did n't tell it him."

"You told him all you knew?"

"But it was precious little, sir," retorted Mr. Tapley. "There was very little respectin' you that I was able to tell him, sir. I only mentioned my opinion that Mr. Pecksniff would find himself deceived, sir, and that you would find yourself deceived, and that he would find himself deceived, sir."

"In what?" asked Mr. Chuzzlewit.

"Meaning him, sir?"

"Meaning both him and me."

"Well, sir," said Mr. Tapley; "in your old opinions of each other. As to him, sir, and his opinions, I know he 's a altered man. I know it. I know'd it long afore he spoke to you t' other day, and I must say it. Nobody don't know half as much of him as I do. Nobody can't. There was always a deal of good in him, but a little of it got crusted over somehow. I can't say who rolled the paste of that 'ere crust myself, but —"

"Go on," said Martin. "Why do you stop?"

"But it — well! I beg your pardon, but I think it may have been you, sir. Unintentional I think it may have been you. I don't believe that neither of you gave the other quite a fair chance. There! Now I 've got rid on it," said Mr. Tapley, in a fit of desperation: "I can't go a carryin' it about in my own mind, bustin' myself with it; yesterday was quite long enough. It 's out now. I can't help it. I 'm sorry for it. Don't wisit it on him, sir; that 's all."

It was clear that Mark expected to be ordered out immediately, and was quite prepared to go.

"So you think," said Martin, "that his old faults are, in some degree, of my creation, do you?"

"Well, sir," retorted Mr. Tapley, "I'm wery sorry, but I can't unsay it. It's hardly fair of you, sir, to make a ignorant man conwict himself in this way, but I do think so. I am as respectful disposed to you, sir, as a man can be; but I *do* think so."

The light of a faint smile seemed to break through the dull steadiness of Martin's face, as he looked attentively at him, without replying.

"Yet you are an ignorant man, you say," he observed, after a long pause.

"Wery much so," Mr. Tapley replied.

"And I a learned, well-instructed man, you think?"

"Likewise wery much so," Mr. Tapley answered.

The old man, with his chin resting on his hand, paced the room twice or thrice before he added: —

"You have left him this morning?"

"Come straight from him now, sir."

"For what, does he suppose?"

"He don't know wot to suppose, sir, no more than myself. I told him jest wot passed yesterday, sir, and that you had said to me, 'Can you be here by seven in the morning?' and that you had said to him, through me, 'Can you be here by ten in the morning?' and that I had said 'Yes' to both. That's all, sir."

His frankness was so genuine that it plainly *was* all.

"Perhaps," said Martin, "he may think you are going to desert him, and to serve me?"

"I have served him in that sort of way, sir," replied Mark, without the loss of any atom of his self-possession, "and we have been that sort of companions in misfortune, that my opinion is, he don't believe a word on it; no more than you do, sir."

"Will you help me to dress, and get me some breakfast from the hotel?" asked Martin.

"With pleasure, sir," said Mark.

"And by and by," pursued Martin, "remaining in the room, as I wish you to do, will you attend to the door yonder —give admission to visitors, I mean, when they knock."

"Certainly, sir," said Mr. Tapley.

"You will not find it necessary to express surprise at their appearance," Martin suggested.

"Oh, dear, no, sir!" said Mr. Tapley; "not at all."

Although he pledged himself to this with perfect confidence, he was in a state of unbounded astonishment even now. Martin appeared to observe it, and to have some sense of the ludicrous bearing of Mr. Tapley under these perplexing circumstances; for, in spite of the composure of his voice and the gravity of his face, the same indistinct light flickered on the latter several times. Mark bestirred himself, however, to execute the offices with which he was entrusted; and soon lost all tendency to any outward expression of his surprise, in the occupation of being brisk and busy.

But when he had put Mr. Chuzzlewit's clothes in good order for dressing, and when that gentleman was dressed and sitting at his breakfast, Mr. Tapley's feelings of wonder began to return upon him with great violence; and standing beside the old man, with a napkin under his arm (it was as natural and easy a joke to Mark to be a butler in the Temple as it had been to volunteer as cook on board the Screw), he found it difficult to resist the temptation of casting sidelong glances at him very often. Nay, he found it impossible; and accordingly yielded to this impulse so often that Martin caught him in the fact some fifty times. The extraordinary things Mr. Tapley did with his own face when any of these detections occurred; the sudden occasions he had to rub his eyes, or his nose, or his chin; the look of wisdom with which he immediately plunged into the deepest thought, or became intensely interested in the habits and customs of the flies upon the ceiling, or the sparrows out of doors; or the overwhelming politeness with which he endeavoured to hide his confusion by handing the muffin, may not unreasonably be assumed to have exercised the utmost power of feature that even Martin Chuzzlewit the elder possessed.

But he sat perfectly quiet, and took his breakfast at his leisure, or made a show of doing so, for he scarcely ate or drank, and frequently lapsed into long intervals of musing. When he had finished, Mark sat down to his breakfast at the same table; and Mr. Chuzzlewit, quite silent still, walked up and down the room.

Mark cleared away in due course, and set out a chair for him, in which, as the time drew on towards ten o'clock, he took his seat, leaning his hands upon his stick, and clenching them upon the handle, and resting his chin on them again. All his impatience and abstraction of manner had vanished now; and as he sat there, looking, with his keen eyes, steadily towards the door, Mark could not help thinking what a firm, square, powerful face it was; or exulting in the thought that Mr. Pecksniff, after playing a pretty long game of bowls with its owner, seemed to be at last in a very fair way of coming in for a rubber or two.

Mark's uncertainty in respect of what was going to be done or said, and by whom to whom, would have excited him in itself. But knowing for a certainty, besides, that young Martin was coming, and in a very few minutes must arrive, he found it by no means easy to remain quiet and silent. But excepting that he occasionally coughed in a hollow and unnatural manner to relieve himself, he behaved with great decorum through the longest ten minutes he had ever known.

A knock at the door. Mr. Westlock. Mr. Tapley, in admitting him, raised his eyebrows to the highest possible pitch, implying thereby that he considered himself in an unsatisfactory position. Mr. Chuzzlewit received him very courteously.

Mark waited at the door for Tom Pinch and his sister, who were coming up the stairs. The old man went to meet them; took her hands in his; and kissed her on the cheek. As this looked promising, Mr. Tapley smiled benignantly.

Mr. Chuzzlewit had resumed his chair before young Martin, who was close behind them, entered. The old man, scarcely looking at him, pointed to a distant seat. This was less encouraging; and Mr. Tapley's spirits fell again.

He was quickly summoned to the door by another knock. He did not start, or cry, or tumble down, at sight of Miss Graham and Mrs. Lupin, but he drew a very long breath, and came back perfectly resigned, looking on them and on the rest with an expression which seemed to say that nothing could surprise him any more; and that he was rather glad to have done with that sensation for ever.

The old man received Mary no less tenderly than he had received Tom Pinch's sister. A look of friendly recognition

passed between himself and Mrs. Lupin, which implied the existence of a perfect understanding between them. It engendered no astonishment in Mr. Tapley; for, as he afterwards observed, he had retired from the business, and sold off the stock.

Not the least curious feature in this assemblage was that everybody present was so much surprised and embarrassed by the sight of everybody else that nobody ventured to speak. Mr. Chuzzlewit alone broke silence.

"Set the door open, Mark!" he said; "and come here."

Mark obeyed.

The last appointed footstep sounded now upon the stairs. They all knew it. It was Mr. Pecksniff's; and Mr. Pecksniff was in a hurry, too, for he came bounding up with such uncommon expedition that he stumbled twice or thrice.

"Where is my venerable friend?" he cried, upon the upper landing; and then with open arms came darting in.

Old Martin merely looked at him; but Mr. Pecksniff started back as if he had received the charge of an electric battery.

"My venerable friend is well?" cried Mr. Pecksniff.

"Quite well."

It seemed to reassure the anxious inquirer. He clasped his hands, and, looking upward with a pious joy, silently expressed his gratitude. He then looked round on the assembled group, and shook his head reproachfully — for such a man severely, quite severely.

"Oh, vermin!" said Mr. Pecksniff. "Oh, blood-suckers! Is it not enough that you have embittered the existence of an individual, wholly unparalleled in the biographical records of amiable persons; but must you now, even now, when he has made his election, and reposed his trust in a Numble, but at least sincere and disinterested relative; must you now, vermin and swarmers (I regret to make use of these strong expressions, my dear sir, but there are times when honest indignation will not be controlled); must you now, vermin and swarmers (for I WILL repeat it), taking advantage of his unprotected state, assemble round him from all quarters, as wolves and vultures, and other animals of the feathered tribe assemble round — I will not say round carrion or a carcass, for Mr. Chuzzlewit is quite the contrary — but round their prey; their prey; to rifle and despoil; gorging their voracious maws, and staining their

offensive beaks, with every description of carnivorous enjoyment!"

As he stopped to fetch his breath, he waved them off, in a solemn manner, with his hand.

"Horde of unnatural plunderers and robbers!" he continued; "leave him! leave him, I say! Begone! Abscond. You had better be off! Wander over the face of the earth, young sirs, like vagabonds as you are, and do not presume to remain in a spot which is hallowed by the grey hairs of the patriarchal gentleman to whose tottering limbs I have the honour to act as an unworthy, but I hope an unassuming, prop and staff. And you, my tender sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, addressing himself in a tone of gentle remonstrance to the old man, "how could you ever leave me, though even for this short period! You have absented yourself, I do not doubt, upon some act of kindness to me; bless you for it; but you must not do it; you must not be so venturesome. I should really be angry with you if I could, my friend!"

He advanced with outstretched arms to take the old man's hand. But he had not seen how the hand clasped and clutched the stick within its grasp. As he came smiling on, and got within his reach, old Martin, with his burning indignation crowded into one vehement burst, and flashing out of every line and wrinkle in his face, rose up, and struck him down upon the ground.

With such a well-directed, nervous blow, that down he went, as heavily and true as if the charge of a Life-Guardsman had tumbled him out of a saddle. And whether he was stunned by the shock, or only confused by the wonder and novelty of this warm reception, he did not offer to get up again; but lay there, looking about him, with a disconcerted meekness in his face so enormously ridiculous that neither Mark Tapley nor John Westlock could repress a smile, though both were actively interposing to prevent a repetition of the blow; which the old man's gleaming eyes and vigorous attitude seemed to render one of the most probable events in the world.

"Drag him away! Take him out of my reach!" said Martin. "Or I can't help it. The strong restraint I have put upon my hands has been enough to palsy them. I am not master of myself, while he is within their range. Drag him away!"

Seeing that he still did not rise, Mr. Tapley, without any compromise about it, actually did drag him away, and stick him up on the floor, with his back against the opposite wall.

"Hear me, rascal!" said Mr. Chuzzlewit. "I have summoned you here to witness your own work. I have summoned you here to witness it, because I know it will be gall and wormwood to you! I have summoned you here to witness it, because I know the sight of everybody here must be a dagger in your mean, false heart! What! do you know me as I am, at last?"

Mr. Pecksniff had cause to stare at him, for the triumph in his face and speech and figure was a sight to stare at.

"Look there!" said the old man, pointing at him, and appealing to the rest. "Look there! And then — come hither, my dear Martin — look here! here! here!" At every earnest repetition of the word he pressed his grandson closer to his breast.

"The passion I felt, Martin, when I dared not do this," he said, "was in the blow I struck just now. Why did we ever part! How could we ever part! How could you ever fly from me to him!"

Martin was about to answer, but he stopped him, and went on.

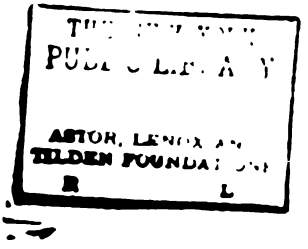
"The fault was mine no less than yours. Mark has told me so to-day, and I have known it long; though not so long as I might have done. Mary, my love, come here."

As she trembled and was very pale, he sat her in his own chair, and stood beside it with her hand in his; and Martin standing by him.

"The curse of our house," said the old man, looking kindly down upon her, "has been the love of self; has ever been the love of self. How often have I said so, when I never knew that I had wrought it upon others!"

He drew one hand through Martin's arm, and standing so, between them, proceeded thus: —

"You all know how I bred this orphan up, to tend me. None of you can know by what degrees I have come to regard her as a daughter; for she has won upon me, by her self-forgetfulness, her tenderness, her patience, all the goodness of her nature, when Heaven is her witness that I took but little pains to draw it forth. It blossomed without cultivation, and it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ripened without heat. I cannot find it in my heart to say that I am sorry for it now, or yonder fellow might be holding up his head."

Mr. Pecksniff put his hand into his waistcoat, and slightly shook that part of him to which allusion had been made; as if to signify that it was still uppermost.

"There is a kind of selfishness," said Martin — "I have learned it in my own experience of my own breast — which is constantly upon the watch for selfishness in others; and holding others at a distance by suspicions and distrusts, wonders why they don't approach, and don't confide, and calls that selfishness in them. Thus I once doubted those about me — not without reason in the beginning — and thus I once doubted you, Martin."

"Not without reason," Martin answered, "either."

"Listen, hypocrite! Listen, smooth-tongued, servile, crawling knave!" said Martin. "Listen, you shallow dog. What! When I was seeking him, you had already spread your nets; you were already fishing for him, were ye? When I lay ill in this good woman's house, and your meek spirit pleaded for my grandson, you had already caught him, had ye? Counting on the restoration of the love you knew I bore him, you designed him for one of your two daughters, did ye? Or failing that, you traded in him as a speculation which at any rate should blind me with the lustre of your charity, and found a claim upon me! Why, even then I knew you, and I told you so. Did I tell you that I knew you, even then?"

"I am not angry, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff softly. "I can bear a great deal from you. I will never contradict you, Mr. Chuzzlewit."

"Observe!" said Martin, looking round. "I put myself in that man's hands on terms as mean and base, and as degrading to himself as I could render them in words. I stated them at length to him, before his own children, syllable by syllable, as coarsely as I could, and with as much offence, and with as plain an exposition of my contempt, as words — not looks and manner merely — could convey. If I had only called the angry blood into his face, I would have wavered in my purpose. If I had only stung him into being a man for a minute, I would have abandoned it. If he had offered me one word of remonstrance, in favour of the grandson whom he supposed I

had disinherited; if he had pleaded with me, though never so faintly, against my appeal to him to abandon him to misery and cast him from his house; I think I could have borne with him for ever afterwards. But not a word, not a word. Pandering to the worst of human passions was the office of his nature; and faithfully he did his work!"

"I am not angry," observed Mr. Pecksniff. "I am hurt, Mr. Chuzzlewit — wounded in my feelings — but I am not angry, my good sir."

Mr. Chuzzlewit resumed.

"Once resolved to try him, I was resolute to pursue the trial to the end; but while I was bent on fathoming the depth of his duplicity, I made a sacred compact with myself that I would give him credit on the other side for any latent spark of goodness, honour, forbearance — any virtue — that might glimmer in him. From first to last, there has been no such thing; not once. He cannot say I have not given him opportunity. He cannot say I have ever led him on. He cannot say I have not left him freely to himself in all things; or that I have not been a passive instrument in his hands, which he might have used for good as easily as evil. Or if he can, he Lies! And that 's his nature, too."

"Mr. Chuzzlewit," interrupted Pecksniff, shedding tears. "I am not angry, sir. I cannot be angry with you. But did you never, my dear sir, express a desire that the unnatural young man who by his wicked arts has estranged your good opinion from me, for the time being — only for the time being — that your grandson, Mr. Chuzzlewit, should be dismissed my house? Recollect yourself, my Christian friend."

"I have said so, have I not?" retorted the old man sternly. "I could not tell how far your specious hypocrisy had deceived him, knave; and knew no better way of opening his eyes than by presenting you before him in your own servile character. Yes. I did express that desire. And you leaped to meet it; and you met it; and turning in an instant on the hand you had licked and beslavered, as only such hounds can, you strengthened, and confirmed, and justified me in my scheme."

Mr. Pecksniff made a bow; a submissive, not to say a grovelling and an abject, bow. If he had been complimented on his practice of the loftiest virtues, he never could have bowed as he bowed then.

"The wretched man who has been murdered," Mr. Chuzzlewit went on to say, "then passing by the name of —"

"Tigg," suggested Mark.

"— of Tigg, brought begging messages to me, on behalf of a friend of his, and an unworthy relative of mine; and finding him a man well enough suited to my purpose, I employed him to glean some news of you, Martin, for me. It was from him I learned that you had taken up your abode with yonder fellow. It was he, who meeting you here, in town, one evening — you remember where?"

"At the pawnbroker's shop," said Martin.

"Yes; watched you to your lodging, and enabled me to send you a Bank note."

"I lately thought," said Martin, greatly moved, "that it had come from you. I little thought that you were interested in my fate. If I had —"

"If you had," returned the old man sorrowfully, "you would have shown less knowledge of me as I seemed to be, and as I really was. I hoped to bring you back, Martin, penitent and humbled. I hoped to distress you into coming back to me. Much as I loved you, I had that to acknowledge which I could not reconcile it to myself to avow then, unless you made submission to me, first. Thus it was I lost you. If I have had, indirectly, any act or part in the fate of that unhappy man, by putting means, however small, within his reach, Heaven forgive me! I might have known, perhaps, that he would misuse money; that it was ill bestowed upon him; and that, sown by his hands, it could engender mischief only. But I never thought of him at that time as having the disposition or ability to be a serious impostor, or otherwise than as a thoughtless, idle-humoured, dissipated spendthrift, sinning more against himself than others, and frequenting low haunts and indulging vicious tastes, to his own ruin only."

"Beggin' your pardon, sir," said Mr. Tapley, who had Mrs. Lupin on his arm by this time, quite agreeably; "if I may make so bold as say so, my opinion is as you was quite correct, and that he turned out perfectly nat'ral for all that. There 's a surprisin' number of men, sir, who, as long as they 've only got their own shoes and stockings to depend upon, will walk down hill, along the gutters quiet enough, and by themselves, and not do much harm. But set any on 'em

up with a coach and horses, sir, and it 's wonderful what a knowledge of drivin' he 'll show, and how he 'll fill his wehicle with passengers, and start off in the middle of the road, neck or nothing, to the Devil! Bless your heart, sir, there 's ever so many Tiggs a passing this here Temple Gate any hour in the day, that only want a chance, to turn out full-blown Montagues, every one!"

"Your ignorance, as you call it, Mark," said Mr. Chuzzlewit, "is wiser than some men's enlightenment, and mine among them. You are right; not for the first time to-day. Now, hear me out, my dears. And hear me, you, who, if what I have been told be accurately stated, are Bankrupt in pocket no less than in good name! And when you have heard me, leave this place, and poison my sight no more!"

Mr. Pecksniff laid his hand upon his breast, and bowed again.

"The penance I have done in his house," said Mr. Chuzzlewit, "has carried this reflection with it constantly, above all others, — that if it had pleased Heaven to visit such infirmity on my old age as really had reduced me to the state in which I feigned to be, I should have brought its misery upon myself. Oh, you whose wealth, like mine, has been a source of continual unhappiness, leading you to distrust the nearest and dearest, and to dig yourself a living grave of suspicion and reserve, take heed that, having cast off all whom you might have bound to you, and tenderly, you do not become in your decay the instrument of such a man as this, and waken in another world to the knowledge of such wrong as would embitter Heaven itself, if wrong or you could ever reach it!"

And then he told them how he had sometimes thought, in the beginning, that love might grow up between Mary and Martin; and how he had pleased his fancy with the picture of observing it when it was new, and taking them to task, apart, in counterfeited doubt, and then confessing to them that it had been an object dear to his heart; and by his sympathy with them, and generous provision for their young fortunes, establishing a claim on their affection and regard which nothing should wither, and which should surround his old age with means of happiness. How in the first dawn of this design, and when the pleasure of such a scheme for the happiness of others was new and indistinct within him, Martin had come to

tell him that he had already chosen for himself; knowing that he, the old man, had some faint project on that head, but ignorant whom it concerned. How it was little comfort to him to know that Martin had chosen Her, because the grace of his design was lost, and because, finding that she had returned his love, he tortured himself with the reflection that they, so young, to whom he had been so kind a benefactor, were already like the world, and bent on their own selfish, stealthy ends. How in the bitterness of this impression, and of his past experience, he had reproached Martin so harshly (forgetting that he had never invited his confidence on such a point, and confounding what he had meant to do with what he had done) that high words sprung up between them, and they separated in wrath. How he loved him still, and hoped he would return. How on the night of his illness at the Dragon, he had secretly written tenderly of him, and made him his heir, and sanctioned his marriage with Mary; and how, after his interview with Mr. Pecksniff, he had distrusted him again, and burnt the paper to ashes, and had lain down in his bed distracted by suspicions, doubts, and regrets.

And then he told them how, resolved to probe this Pecksniff, and to prove the constancy and truth of Mary (to himself no less than Martin), he had conceived and entered on his plan; and how, beneath her gentleness and patience, he had softened more and more; still more and more beneath the goodness and simplicity, the honour and the manly faith of Tom. And when he spoke of Tom, he said God bless him! and the tears were in his eyes; for he said that Tom, mistrusted and disliked by him at first, had come like summer rain upon his heart; and had disposed it to believe in better things. And Martin took him by the hand, and Mary, too, and John, his old friend, stoutly, too; and Mark, and Mrs. Lupin, and his sister, little Ruth. And peace of mind, deep, tranquil peace of mind, was in Tom's heart.

The old man then related how nobly Mr. Pecksniff had performed the duty in which he stood indebted to society, in the matter of Tom's dismissal; and how, having often heard disparagement of Mr. Westlock from Pecksniffian lips, and knowing him to be a friend to Tom, he had used, through his confidential agent and solicitor, that little artifice which had kept him in readiness to receive his unknown friend in London.

And he called on Mr. Pecksniff (by the name of Scoundrel) to remember that there again he had not trapped him to do evil, but that he had done it of his own free will and agency; nay, that he had cautioned him against it. And once again he called on Mr. Pecksniff (by the name of Hangdog) to remember that when Martin, coming home at last, an altered man, had sued for the forgiveness which awaited him, he, Pecksniff, had rejected him in language of his own, and had remorselessly stepped in between him and the least touch of natural tenderness. "For which," said the old man, "if the bending of my finger would remove a halter from your neck, I would n't bend it!"

"Martin," he added, "your rival has not been a dangerous one, but Mrs. Lupin here has played duenna for some weeks; not so much to watch your love as to watch her lover. For that Ghoul" — his fertility in finding names for Mr. Pecksniff was astonishing — "would have crawled into her daily walks otherwise, and polluted the fresh air. What 's this? Her hand is trembling strangely. See if you can hold it."

Hold it! If he clasped it half as tightly as he did her waist. — Well, well! That 's dangerous.

But it was good in him that even then, in his high fortune and happiness, with her lips nearly printed on his own, and her proud young beauty in his close embrace, he had a hand still left to stretch out to Tom Pinch.

"Oh, Tom! Dear Tom! I saw you, accidentally, coming here. Forgive me!"

"Forgive!" cried Tom. "I 'll never forgive you as long as I live, Martin, if you say another syllable about it. Joy to you both! Joy, my dear fellow, fifty thousand times."

Joy! There is not a blessing on earth that Tom did not wish them. There is not a blessing on earth that Tom would not have bestowed upon them, if he could.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mr. Tapley, stepping forward; "but you was mentionin', just now, a lady of the name of Lupin, sir."

"I was," returned old Martin.

"Yes, sir. It 's a pretty name, sir?"

"A very good name," said Martin.

"It seems a'most a pity to change such a name into Tapley; don't it, sir?" said Mark.

"That depends upon the lady. What is *her* opinion?"

"Why, sir," said Mr. Tapley, retiring, with a bow, towards the buxom hostess, "her opinion is as the name ain't a change for the better, but the indiwidual may be; and therefore, if nobody ain't acquainted with no jest cause or impediment, et cetrer, the Blue Dragon will be con-werted into the Jolly Tapley. A sign of my own inwention, sir. Wery new, con-wivial, and expressive!"

The whole of these proceedings were so agreeable to Mr. Pecksniff that he stood with his eyes fixed upon the floor and his hands clasping one another alternately, as if a host of penal sentences were being passed upon him. Not only did his figure appear to have shrunk, but his discomfiture seemed to have extended itself even to his dress. His clothes seemed to have grown shabbier, his linen to have turned yellow, his hair to have become lank and frowzy; his very boots looked villainous and dim, as if their gloss had departed with his own.

Feeling, rather than seeing, that the old man now pointed to the door, he raised his eyes, picked up his hat, and thus addressed him: —

"Mr. Chuzzlewit, sir! you have partaken of my hospitality."

"And paid for it," he observed.

"Thank you. That savours," said Mr. Pecksniff, taking out his pocket-handkerchief, "of your old familiar frankness. You have paid for it. I was about to make the remark. You have deceived me, sir. Thank you again. I am glad of it. To see you in the possession of your health and faculties on any terms is, in itself, a sufficient recompense. To have been deceived, implies a trusting nature. Mine is a trusting nature. I am thankful for it. I would rather have a trusting nature, do you know, sir, than a doubting one!"

Here Mr. Pecksniff, with a sad smile, bowed, and wiped his eyes.

"There is hardly any person present, Mr. Chuzzlewit," said Pecksniff, "by whom I have *not* been deceived. I have forgiven those persons on the spot. That was my duty; and, of course, I have done it. Whether it was worthy of you to partake of my hospitality, and to act the part you did act in my house — that, sir, is a question which I leave to your own conscience. And your conscience does not acquit you. No, sir; no!"

Pronouncing these last words in a loud and solemn voice, Mr. Pecksniff was not so absolutely lost in his own fervour as to be unmindful of the expediency of getting a little nearer to the door.

"I have been struck this day," said Mr. Pecksniff, "with a walking-stick (which I have every reason to believe has knobs upon it) on that delicate and exquisite portion of the human anatomy, the brain. Several blows have been inflicted, sir, without a walking-stick, upon that tenderer portion of my frame, my heart. You have mentioned, sir, my being bankrupt in my purse. Yes, sir, I am. By an unfortunate speculation, combined with treachery, I find myself reduced to poverty; at a time, sir, when the child of my bosom is widowed, and affliction and disgrace are in my family."

Here Mr. Pecksniff wiped his eyes again, and gave himself two or three little knocks upon the breast, as if he were answering two or three other little knocks from within, given by the tinkling hammer of his conscience, to express "Cheer up, my boy!"

"I know the human mind, although I trust it. That is my weakness. Do I not know, sir" — here he became exceedingly plaintive, and was observed to glance towards Tom Pinch — "that my misfortunes bring this treatment on me? Do I not know, sir, that but for them I never should have heard what I have heard to-day? Do I not know that, in the silence and the solitude of night, a little voice will whisper in your ear, Mr. Chuzzlewit, 'This was not well. This was not well, sir!' Think of this, sir (if you will have the goodness), remote from the impulses of passion, and apart from the specialities, if I may use that strong remark, of prejudice. And if you ever contemplate the silent tomb, sir, — which you will excuse me for entertaining some doubt of your doing, after the conduct into which you have allowed yourself to be betrayed this day — if you ever contemplate the silent tomb, sir, think of me. If you find yourself approaching to the silent tomb, sir, think of me. If you should wish to have anything inscribed upon your silent tomb, sir, let it be, that I — ah, my remorseful sir! — that I, the humble individual who has now the honour of reproaching you, forgave you. That I forgave you when my injuries were fresh, and when my bosom was newly wrung. It may be bitterness to you to hear it now, sir, but you will live to seek a

consolation in it. May you find a consolation in it, when you want it, sir! Good morning!"

With this sublime address, Mr. Pecksniff departed. But the effect of his departure was much impaired by his being immediately afterwards run against, and nearly knocked down by, a monstrously excited little man in velveteen shorts and a very tall hat; who came bursting up the stairs, and straight into the chambers of Mr. Chuzzlewit, as if he were deranged.

"Is there anybody here that knows him?" cried the little man. "Is there anybody here that knows him? Oh, my stars, is there anybody here that knows him!"

They looked at each other for an explanation; but nobody knew anything more than that here was an excited little man with a very tall hat on, running in and out of the room as hard as he could go, making his single pair of bright blue stockings appear at least a dozen, and constantly repeating in a shrill voice, "*Is* there anybody here that knows him?"

"If your brains is not turned topjy turjey, Mr. Sweedlepipes," exclaimed another voice, "hold that there nige of yourn, I beg you, sir."

At the same time Mrs. Gamp was seen in the doorway, out of breath from coming up so many stairs, and panting fearfully, but dropping curtseys to the last.

"Excuge the weakness of the man," said Mrs. Gamp, eyeing Mr. Sweedlepipe with great indignation; "and well I might expect it, as I should have know'd, and wishin' he was drownded in the Thames afore I had brought him here, which not a blessed hour ago he nearly shaved the noge off from the father of as lovely a family as ever, Mr. Chuzzlewit, was born three sets of twins, and would have done it, only he see it a goin' in the glass, and dodged the rager. And never, Mr. Sweedlepipes, I do assure you, sir, did I so well know what a misfortun' it was to be acquainted with you, as now I do, which so I say, sir, and I don't deceive you!"

"I ask your pardon, ladies and gentlemen all," cried the little barber, taking off his hat, "and yours too, Mrs. Gamp. But — but," he added this, half laughing and half crying, "*Is* there anybody here that knows him!"

As the barber said these words, a something in top-boots, with its head bandaged up, staggered into the room, and began

going round and round and round, apparently under impression that it was walking straight forward.

"Look at him!" cried the excited little barber. "H[illegible] is! That 'll soon wear off, and then he 'll be all [illegible]. He 's no more dead than I am. He 's all alive and [illegible] ain't you, Bailey?"

"R—r—reether so, Poll!" replied that gentleman.

"Look here!" cried the little barber, laughing and [illegible] the same breath. "When I steady him he comes a[illegible] There! He 's all right now. Nothing 's the matter w[illegible] now, except that he 's a little shook and rather [illegible] there, Bailey?"

"R—r—reether shook, Poll—reether so!" said Mr [illegible] "What, my lovely Sairey! There you air!"

"What a boy he is!" cried the tender-hearted P[illegible] sobbing over him. "I never see sech a boy! It 's a[illegible] He 's full of it. He shall go into the business a[illegible] I am determined he shall. We 'll make it Swe[illegible] Bailey. He shall have the sporting branch (what a [illegible] be for the matches!) and me the shavin'. I 'll make [illegible] birds to him as soon as ever he 's well enough. He [illegible] the little bullfinch in the shop, and all. He 's sech a [illegible] ask your pardon, ladies and gentlemen, but I th[illegible] might be some one here that know'd him!"

Mrs. Gamp had observed, not without jealousy and [illegible] that a favourable impression appeared to exist in behalf [illegible] Sweedlepipe and his young friend; and that she had [illegible] rather into the background in consequence. She now str[illegible] to the front, therefore, and stated her business.

"Which, Mr. Chuzzlewit," she said, "is well bekn[illegible] Mrs. Harris as has one sweet infant (though she d[illegible] it known) in her own family by the mother's side k[illegible] in a bottle; and that sweet babe she see at Greenw[illegible] travelling in company vith the pink-eyed lady, Pr[illegible] and livin' skelinton, which judge her feelins wen the [illegible] organ played, and she was showed her own dear sister [illegible] the same not bein' expected from the outside picter, wh[illegible] was painted quite contrairy in a livin' state, a many [illegible] larger, and performing beautiful upon the Arp, which [illegible] did that dear child know or do; since breathe it never [illegible] speak on, in this wale! And Mrs. Harris, Mr. Chuzz[illegible]

has know'd me many year, and can give you information that the lady which is widdered can't do better and may do worse than let me wait upon her, which I hope to do. Permittin' the sweet faces as I see afore me."

"Oh!" said Mr. Chuzzlewit. "Is that your business? Was this good person paid for the trouble we gave her?"

"I paid her, sir," returned Mark Tapley; "liberal."

"The young man's words is true," said Mrs. Gamp, "and thank you kindly."

"Then here we will close our acquaintance, Mrs. Gamp," retorted Mr. Chuzzlewit. "And Mr. Sweedlepipe — is that your name?"

"That is my name, sir," replied Poll, accepting with a profusion of gratitude some chinking pieces which the old man slipped into his hand.

"Mr. Sweedlepipe, take as much care of your lady-lodger as you can, and give her a word or two of good advice now and then. Such," said old Martin, looking gravely at the astonished Mrs. Gamp, "as hinting at the expediency of a little less liquor, and a little more humanity, and a little less regard for herself, and a little more regard for her patients, and perhaps a trifle of additional honesty. Or when Mrs. Gamp gets into trouble, Mr. Sweedlepipe, it had better not be at a time when I am near enough to the Old Bailey to volunteer myself as a witness to her character. Endeavour to impress that upon her at your leisure, if you please."

Mrs. Gamp clasped her hands, turned up her eyes until they were quite invisible, threw back her bonnet for the admission of fresh air to her heated brow; and in the act of saying faintly — "Less liquor! — Sairey Gamp — Bottle on the chimley-piece, and let me put my lips to it, when I am so disposed!" — fell into one of the walking swoons, in which pitiable state she was conducted forth by Mr. Sweedlepipe, who, between his two patients, the swooning Mrs. Gamp and the revolving Bailey, had enough to do, poor fellow.

The old man looked about him, with a smile, until his eyes rested on Tom Pinch's sister; when he smiled the more.

"We will all dine here together," he said; "and as you and Mary have enough to talk of, Martin, you shall keep house for us until the afternoon, with Mr. and Mrs. Tapley. I must see your lodgings in the mean while, Tom."

Tom was quite delighted. So was Ruth. She would go with them.

"Thank you, my love," said Mr. Chuzzlewit. "But I am afraid I must take Tom a little out of the way, on business. Suppose you go on first, my dear?"

Pretty little Ruth was equally delighted to do that.

"But not alone," said Martin, "not alone. Mr. Westlock, I dare say, will escort you."

Why, of course he would: what else had Mr. Westlock in his mind? How dull these old men are!

"You are sure you have no engagement?" he persisted.

Engagement! As if he could have any engagement!

So they went off arm in arm. When Tom and Mr. Chuzzlewit went off arm in arm a few minutes after them, the latter was still smiling; and really, for a gentleman of his habits, in rather a knowing manner.

CHAPTER LIII

WHAT JOHN WESTLOCK SAID TO TOM PINCH'S SISTER; WHAT TOM PINCH'S SISTER SAID TO JOHN WESTLOCK; WHAT TOM PINCH SAID TO BOTH OF THEM; AND HOW THEY ALL PASSED THE REMAINDER OF THE DAY.

BRILLIANTLY the Temple Fountain sparkled in the sun, and laughingly its liquid music played, and merrily the idle drops of water danced and danced, and, peeping out in sport among the trees, plunged lightly down to hide themselves, as little Ruth and her companion came towards it.

And why they came towards the Fountain at all is a mystery; for they had no business there. It was not in their way. It was quite out of their way. They had no more to do with the Fountain, bless you, than they had with — with Love, or any out of the way thing of that sort.

It was all very well for Tom and his sister to make appointments by the Fountain, but that was quite another affair. Because, of course, when she had to wait a minute or two, it would have been very awkward for her to have had to wait in any but a tolerably quiet spot; and that was as quiet a spot, everything considered, as they could choose. But when she had John Westlock to take care of her, and was going home with her arm in his (home being in a different direction altogether), their coming anywhere near that Fountain was quite extraordinary.

However, there they found themselves. And another extraordinary part of the matter was that they seemed to have come there by a silent understanding. Yet when they got there, they were a little confused by being there, which was the strangest part of all; because there is nothing naturally confusing in a Fountain. We all know that.

What a good old place it was! John said. With quite an earnest affection for it.

"A pleasant place, indeed," said little Ruth. "So shady!"

Oh, wicked little Ruth!

They came to a stop when John began to praise it. The day was exquisite; and stopping at all, it was quite natural — nothing could be more so — that they should glance down Garden Court; because Garden Court ends in the Garden, and the Garden ends in the River, and that glimpse is very bright and fresh and shining on a summer's day. Then, oh, little Ruth, why not look boldly at it! Why fit that tiny, precious, blessed little foot into the cracked corner of an insensible old flagstone in the pavement, and be so very anxious to adjust it to a nicety!

If the Fiery faced matron in the crunched bonnet could have seen them as they walked away, how many years' purchase might Fiery Face have been disposed to take for her situation in Furnival's Inn as laundress to Mr. Westlock!

They went away, but not through London's streets! Through some enchanted city, where the pavements were of air; where all the rough sounds of a stirring town were softened into gentle music; where everything was happy; where there was no distance, and no time. There were two good-tempered burly draymen letting down big butts of beer into a cellar, somewhere; and when John helped her — almost lifted her — the lightest, easiest, neatest thing you ever saw — across the rope, they said he owed them a good turn for giving him the chance. Celestial draymen!

Green pastures in the summer tide, deep-littered straw-yards in the winter, no stint of corn and clover, ever, to that noble horse who *would* dance on the pavement with a gig behind him, and who frightened her, and made her clasp his arm with both hands (both hands: meeting one upon the other, so endearingly!), and caused her to implore him to take refuge in the pastry-cook's; and afterwards to peep out at the door so shrinkingly; and then, looking at him with those eyes, to ask him was he sure — now was he sure — they might go safely on! Oh, for a string of rampant horses! For a lion, for a bear, a mad bull, anything to bring the little hands together on his arm, again!

They talked, of course. They talked of Tom, and all these changes, and the attachment Mr. Chuzzlewit had conceived for him, and the bright prospects he had in such a friend, and a great deal more to the same purpose. The more they talked, the more afraid this fluttering little Ruth became of any pause; and sooner than have a pause she would say the same things

over again; and if she had n't courage or presence of mind enough for that (to say the truth she very seldom had), she was ten thousand times more charming and irresistible than she had been before.

"Martin will be married very soon now, I suppose," said John.

She supposed he would. Never did a bewitching little woman suppose anything in such a faint voice as Ruth supposed that.

But feeling that another of those alarming pauses was approaching, she remarked that he would have a beautiful wife. Did n't Mr. Westlock think so?

"Ye—yes," said John: "oh, yes."

She feared he was rather hard to please, he spoke so coldly.

"Rather say already pleased," said John. "I have scarcely seen her. I had no care to see her. I had no eyes for *her*, this morning."

Oh, good gracious!

It was well they had reached their destination. She never could have gone any further. It would have been impossible to walk in such a tremble.

Tom had not come in. They entered the triangular parlour together, and alone. Fiery Face, Fiery Face, how many years' purchase *now!*

She sat down on the little sofa, and untied her bonnet-strings. He sat down by her side, and very near her: very, very near her. Oh, rapid, swelling, bursting little heart, you knew that it would come to this, and hoped it would. Why beat so wildly, heart!

"Dear Ruth! Sweet Ruth! If I had loved you less, I could have told you that I loved you, long ago. I have loved you from the first. There never was a creature in the world more truly loved than you, dear Ruth, by me!"

She clasped her little hands before her face. The gushing tears of joy, and pride, and hope, and innocent affection would not be restrained. Fresh from her full young heart they came to answer him.

"My dear love! If this is — I almost dare to hope it is, now — not painful or distressing to you, you make me happier than I can tell, or you imagine. Darling Ruth! My own good, gentle, winning Ruth! I hope I know the value of

your heart, I hope I know the worth of your angel nature. Let me try and show you that I do; and you will make me happier, Ruth —"

"Not happier," she sobbed, "than you make me. No one can be happier, John, than you make me!"

Fiery Face, provide yourself! The usual wages or the usual warning. It's all over, Fiery Face. We need n't trouble you any further.

The little hands could meet each other now, without a rampant horse to urge them. There was no occasion for lions, bears, or mad bulls. It could all be done, and infinitely better, without their assistance. No burly drayman or big butts of beer were wanted for apologies. No apology at all was wanted. The soft, light touch fell coyly, but quite naturally, upon the lover's shoulder; the delicate waist, the drooping head, the blushing cheek, the beautiful eyes, the exquisite mouth itself, were all as natural as possible. If all the horses in Araby had run away at once, they could n't have improved upon it.

They soon began to talk of Tom again.

"I hope he will be glad to hear of it!" said John, with sparkling eyes.

Ruth drew the little hands a little tighter when he said it, and looked up seriously into his face.

"I am never to leave him, *am* I, dear? I could never leave Tom. I am sure you know that."

"Do you think I would ask you?" he returned, with a — well! Never mind with what.

"I am sure you never would," she answered, the bright tears standing in her eyes.

"And I will swear it, Ruth, my darling, if you please. Leave Tom! That would be a strange beginning. Leave Tom, dear! If Tom and we be not inseparable, and Tom (God bless him) have not all honour and all love in our home, my little wife, may that home never be! And that 's a strong oath, Ruth."

Shall it be recorded how she thanked him? Yes, it shall. In all simplicity and innocence and purity of heart, yet with a timid, graceful, half-determined hesitation, she set a little rosy seal upon the vow, whose colour was reflected in her face, and flashed up to the braiding of her dark brown hair.

"Tom will be so happy, and so proud, and glad," she said, clasping her little hands. "But so surprised! I am sure he has never thought of such a thing."

Of course John asked her immediately — because you know they were in that foolish state when great allowances must be made — when *she* had begun to think of such a thing, and this made a little diversion in their talk, — a charming diversion to them, but not so interesting to us, — at the end of which they came back to Tom again.

"Ah! dear Tom!" said Ruth. "I suppose I ought to tell you everything now. I should have no secrets from you. Should I, John, love?"

It is of no use saying how that preposterous John answered her, because he answered in a manner which is untranslatable on paper, though highly satisfactory in itself. But what he conveyed was, No, no, no, sweet Ruth; or something to that effect.

Then she told him Tom's great secret; not exactly saying how she had found it out, but leaving him to understand it if he liked; and John was sadly grieved to hear it, and was full of sympathy and sorrow. But they would try, he said, only the more, on this account, to make him happy, and to beguile him with his favourite pursuits. And then, in all the confidence of such a time, he told her how he had a capital opportunity of establishing himself in his old profession in the country; and how he had been thinking, in the event of that happiness coming upon him which had actually come — there was another slight diversion here — how he had been thinking that it would afford occupation to Tom, and enable them to live together in the easiest manner, without any sense of dependence on Tom's part; and to be as happy as the day was long. And Ruth receiving this with joy, they went on catering for Tom to that extent that they had already purchased him a select library and built him an organ, on which he was performing with the greatest satisfaction, when they heard him knocking at the door.

Though she longed to tell him what had happened, poor little Ruth was greatly agitated by his arrival; the more so because she knew that Mr. Chuzzlewit was with him. So she said, all in a tremble: —

"What shall I do, dear John! I can't bear that he should

hear it from any one but me, and I could not tell him unless we were alone."

"Do, my love," said John, "whatever is natural to you on the impulse of the moment, and I am sure it will be right."

He had hardly time to say thus much, and Ruth had hardly time to — just to get a little farther off — upon the sofa, when Tom and Mr. Chuzzlewit came in. Mr. Chuzzlewit came first, and Tom was a few seconds behind him.

Now Ruth had hastily resolved that she would beckon Tom up stairs after a short time, and would tell him in his little bedroom. But when she saw his dear old face come in, her heart was so touched that she ran into his arms, and laid her head down on his breast, and sobbed out, "Bless me, Tom! My dearest brother!"

Tom looked up, in surprise, and saw John Westlock close beside him, holding out his hand.

"John!" cried Tom. "John!"

"Dear Tom," said his friend, "give me your hand. We are brothers, Tom."

Tom wrung it with all his force, embraced his sister fervently, and put her in John Westlock's arms.

"Don't speak to me, John. Heaven is very good to us. I —" Tom could find no further utterance, but left the room; and Ruth went after him.

And when they came back, which they did by and by, she looked more beautiful, and Tom more good and true (if that were possible), than ever. And though Tom could not speak upon the subject even now, being yet too newly glad, he put both his hands in both of John's with emphasis sufficient for the best speech ever spoken.

"I am glad you chose to-day," said Mr. Chuzzlewit to John; with the same knowing smile as when they had left him. "I thought you would. I hope Tom and I lingered behind a discreet time. It 's so long since I had any practical knowledge of these subjects that I have been anxious, I assure you."

"Your knowledge is still pretty accurate, sir," returned John, laughing, "if it led you to foresee what would happen to-day."

"Why, I am not sure, Mr. Westlock," said the old man, "that any great spirit of prophecy was needed, after seeing you and Ruth together. Come hither, pretty one. See what Tom

and I purchased this morning, while you were dealing in exchange with that young merchant there."

The old man's way of seating her beside him, and humouring his voice as if she were a child, was whimsical enough, but full of tenderness, and not ill adapted, somehow, to little Ruth.

"See here!" he said, taking a case from his pocket, "what a beautiful necklace. Ah! How it glitters! Earrings, too, and bracelets, and a zone for your waist. This set is yours, and Mary has another like it. Tom could n't understand why I wanted two. What a short-sighted Tom! Earrings and bracelets, and a zone for your waist! Ah! beautiful! Let us see how brave they look. Ask Mr. Westlock to clasp them on."

It was the prettiest thing to see her holding out her round, white arm; and John (oh, deep, deep John!) pretending that the bracelet was very hard to fasten; it was the prettiest thing to see her girding on the precious little zone, and yet obliged to have assistance because her fingers were in such terrible perplexity; it was the prettiest thing to see her so confused and bashful, with the smiles and blushes playing brightly on her face, like the sparkling light upon the jewels; it was the prettiest thing that you would see, in the common experiences of a twelvemonth, rely upon it.

"The set of jewels and the wearer are so well matched," said the old man, "that I don't know which becomes the other most. Mr. Westlock could tell me, I have no doubt; but I 'll not ask him, for he is bribed. Health to wear them, my dear, and happiness to make you forgetful of them, except as a remembrance from a loving friend!"

He patted her upon the cheek, and said to Tom: —

"I must play the part of a father here, Tom, also. There are not many fathers who marry two such daughters on the same day; but we will overlook the improbability for the gratification of an old man's fancy. I may claim that much indulgence," he added, "for I have gratified few fancies enough in my life tending to the happiness of others, Heaven knows!"

These various proceedings had occupied so much time, and they fell into such a pleasant conversation now, that it was within a quarter of an hour of the time appointed for dinner before any of them thought about it. A hackney-coach soon

carried them to the Temple, however; and there they found everything prepared for their reception.

Mr. Tapley, having been furnished with unlimited credentials relative to the ordering of dinner, had so exerted himself for the honour of the party that a prodigious banquet was served, under the joint direction of himself and his intended. Mr. Chuzzlewit would have had them of the party, and Martin urgently seconded his wish, but Mark could by no means be persuaded to sit down at table; observing that, in having the honour of attending to their comforts, he felt himself, indeed, the landlord of the Jolly Tapley, and could almost delude himself into the belief that the entertainment was actually being held under the Jolly Tapley's roof.

For the better encouragement of himself in this fable, Mr. Tapley took it upon him to issue divers general directions to the waiters from the hotel, relative to the disposal of the dishes, and so forth; and as they were usually in direct opposition to all precedent, and were always issued in his most facetious form of thought and speech, they occasioned great merriment among these attendants; in which Mr. Tapley participated, with an infinite enjoyment of his own humour. He likewise entertained them with short anecdotes of his travels, appropriate to the occasion; and now and then with some comic passage or other between himself and Mrs. Lupin; so that explosive laughs were constantly issuing from the sideboard, and from the backs of chairs; and the head-waiter (who wore powder, and knee-smalls, and was usually a grave man) got to be a bright scarlet in the face, and broke his waistcoat strings, audibly.

Young Martin sat at the head of the table, and Tom Pinch at the foot; and if there were a genial face at that board, it was Tom's. They all took their tone from Tom. Everybody drank to him, everybody looked to him, everybody thought of him, everybody loved him. If he so much as laid down his knife and fork, somebody put out a hand to shake with him. Martin and Mary had taken him aside before dinner, and spoken to him so heartily of the time to come, laying such fervent stress upon the trust they had in his completion of their felicity by his society and closest friendship, that Tom was positively moved to tears. He could n't bear it. His heart was full, he said, of happiness. And so it was. Tom

spoke the honest truth. It was. Large as thy heart was, dear Tom Pinch, it had no room that day for anything but happiness and sympathy!

And there was Fips, old Fips of Austin Friars, present at the dinner, and turning out to be the jolliest old dog that ever did violence to his convivial sentiments by shutting himself up in a dark office. "Where is he!" said Fips, when he came in. And then he pounced on Tom, and told him that he wanted to relieve himself of all his old constraint; and in the first place shook him by one hand, and in the second place shook him by the other, and in the third place nudged him in the waistcoat, and in the fourth place, said, "How *are* you!" and in a great many other places did a great many other things to show his friendliness and joy. And he sang songs, did Fips; and made speeches, did Fips; and knocked off his wine pretty handsomely, did Fips; and, in short, he showed himself a perfect Trump, did Fips, in all respects.

But ah! the happiness of strolling home at night — obstinate little Ruth, she would n't hear of riding! — as they had done on that dear night from Furnival's Inn! The happiness of being able to talk about it, and to confide their happiness to each other! The happiness of stating all their little plans to Tom, and seeing his bright face grow brighter as they spoke!

When they reached home, Tom left John and his sister in the parlour, and went up stairs into his own room, under pretence of seeking a book. And Tom actually winked to himself, when he got up stairs: he thought it such a deep thing to have done.

"They like to be by themselves of course," said Tom; "and I came away so naturally that I have no doubt they are expecting me, every moment, to return. That 's capital!"

But he had not sat reading very long, when he heard a tap at his door.

"May I come in?" said John.

"Oh, surely!" Tom replied.

"Don't leave us, Tom. Don't sit by yourself. We want to make you merry; not melancholy."

"My dear friend," said Tom, with a cheerful smile.

"Brother, Tom; brother."

"My dear brother," said Tom; "there is no danger of my

being melancholy: how can I be melancholy when I know that you and Ruth are so blest in each other! I think I can find my tongue to-night, John," he added, after a moment's pause. "But I never can tell you what unutterable joy this day has given me. It would be unjust to you to speak of your having chosen a portionless girl, for I feel that you know her worth: I am sure you know her worth. Nor will it diminish in your estimation, John, which money might."

"Which money would, Tom," he returned. "Her worth! Oh, who could see her here, and not love her! Who could know her, Tom, and not honour her! Who could ever stand possessed of such a heart as hers, and grow indifferent to the treasure! Who could feel the rapture that I feel to-day, and love as I love her, Tom, without knowing something of her worth! Your joy unutterable! No, no, Tom. It 's mine, it 's mine."

"No, no, John," said Tom. "It 's mine, it 's mine."

Their friendly contention was brought to a close by little Ruth herself, who came peeping in at the door. And oh, the look, the glorious, half-proud, half-timid look she gave Tom, when her lover drew her to his side! As much as to say, "Yes, indeed, Tom, he will do it. But, then, he has a right, you know. Because I *am* fond of him, Tom."

As to Tom, he was perfectly delighted. He could have sat and looked at them, just as they were, for hours.

"I have told Tom, love, as we agreed, that we are not going to permit him to run away, and that we cannot possibly allow it. The loss of one person, and such a person as Tom, too, out of our small household of three, is not to be endured; and so I have told him. Whether he is considerate, or whether he is only selfish, I don't know. But he need n't be considerate, for he is not the least restraint upon us. Is he, dearest Ruth?"

Well! He really did not seem to be any particular restraint upon them, judging from what ensued.

Was it folly in Tom to be so pleased by their remembrance of him, at such a time? Was their graceful love a folly, were their dear caresses follies, was their lengthened parting folly? Was it folly in him to watch her window from the street, and rate its scantiest gleam of light above all diamonds; folly in her to breathe his name upon her knees, and pour out her pure

heart before that Being, from whom such hearts and such affections come!

If these be follies, then, Fiery Face, go on and prosper! If they be not, then, Fiery Face, avaunt! But set the crunched bonnet at some other single gentleman, in any case, for one is lost to thee for ever!

CHAPTER LIV

GIVES THE AUTHOR GREAT CONCERN: FOR IT IS THE LAST IN THE BOOK.

TODGERS'S was in high feather, and mighty preparations for a late breakfast were astir in its commercial bowers. The blissful morning had arrived when Miss Pecksniff was to be united, in holy matrimony, to Augustus.

Miss Pecksniff was in a frame of mind equally becoming to herself and the occasion. She was full of clemency and conciliation. She had laid in several chaldrons of live coals, and was prepared to heap them on the heads of her enemies. She bore no spite nor malice in her heart; not the least.

Quarrels, Miss Pecksniff said, were dreadful things in families; and though she never could forgive her dear papa, she was willing to receive her other relations. They had been separated, she observed, too long. It was enough to call down a judgment upon the family. She believed the death of Jonas *was* a judgment on them for their internal dissensions. And Miss Pecksniff was confirmed in this belief by the lightness with which the visitation had fallen on herself.

By way of doing sacrifice — not in triumph; not, of course, in triumph, but in humiliation of spirit — this amiable young person wrote, therefore, to her kinswoman of the strong mind, and informed her that her nuptials would take place on such a day. That she had been much hurt by the unnatural conduct of herself and daughters, and hoped they might not have suffered in their consciences. That being desirous to forgive her enemies, and make her peace with the world before entering into the most solemn of covenants with the most devoted of men, she now held out the hand of friendship. That if the strong-minded woman took that hand, in the temper in which it was extended to her, she, Miss Pecksniff, did invite her to be present at the ceremony of her marriage, and did furthermore invite the three red-nosed spinsters, her daughters (but

Miss Pecksniff did not particularise their noses), to attend as bridesmaids.

The strong-minded woman returned for answer that herself and daughters were, as regarded their consciences, in the enjoyment of robust health, which she knew Miss Pecksniff would be glad to hear. That she had received Miss Pecksniff's note with unalloyed delight, because she never had attached the least importance to the paltry and insignificant jealousies with which herself and circle had been assailed; otherwise than as she found them, in the contemplation, a harmless source of innocent mirth. That she would joyfully attend Miss Pecksniff's bridal; and that her three dear daughters would be happy to assist on so interesting and *so very unexpected* — which the strong-minded woman underlined — *so very unexpected* an occasion.

On the receipt of this gracious reply, Miss Pecksniff extended her forgiveness and her invitations to Mr. and Mrs. Spottletoe; to Mr. George Chuzzlewit, the bachelor cousin; to the solitary female who usually had the toothache; and to the hairy young gentleman with the outline of a face; surviving remnants of the party that had once assembled in Mr. Pecksniff's parlour. After which, Miss Pecksniff remarked that there was a sweetness in doing our duty which neutralised the bitter in our cups.

The wedding guests had not yet assembled, and, indeed, it was so early that Miss Pecksniff herself was in the act of dressing at her leisure, when a carriage stopped near the Monument; and Mark, dismounting from the rumble, assisted Mr. Chuzzlewit to alight. The carriage remained in waiting; so did Mr. Tapley. Mr. Chuzzlewit betook himself to Todgers's.

He was shown, by the degenerate successor of Mr. Bailey, into the dining-parlour; where — for his visit was expected — Mrs. Todgers immediately appeared.

"You are dressed, I see, for the wedding," he said.

Mrs. Todgers, who was greatly flurried by the preparations, replied in the affirmative.

"It goes against my wishes to have it in progress just now, I assure you, sir," said Mrs. Todgers; "but Miss Pecksniff's mind was set upon it, and it really is time that Miss Pecksniff was married. That cannot be denied, sir."

"No," said Mr. Chuzzlewit, "assuredly not. Her sister takes no part in the proceedings?"

"Oh, dear, no, sir. Poor thing!" said Mrs. Todgers, shaking her head, and dropping her voice. "Since she has known the worst, she has never left my room; the next room."

"Is she prepared to see me?" he inquired.

"Quite prepared, sir."

"Then, let us lose no time."

Mrs. Todgers conducted him into the little back chamber commanding the prospect of the cistern; and there, sadly different from when it had first been her lodging, sat poor Merry, in mourning weeds. The room looked very dark and sorrowful; and so did she; but she had one friend beside her, faithful to the last. Old Chuffey.

When Mr. Chuzzlewit sat down at her side, she took his hand and put it to her lips. She was in great grief. He, too, was agitated; for he had not seen her since their parting in the churchyard.

"I judged you hastily," he said, in a low voice. "I fear I judged you cruelly. Let me know that I have your forgiveness."

She kissed his hand again; and retaining it in hers, thanked him, in a broken voice, for all his kindness to her since.

"Tom Pinch," said Martin, "has faithfully related to me all that you desired him to convey; at a time when he deemed it very improbable that he would ever have an opportunity of delivering your message. Believe me, that if I ever deal again with an ill-advised and unawakened nature, hiding the strength it thinks its weakness, I will have long and merciful consideration for it."

"You had for me; even for me," she answered. "I quite believe it. I said the words you have repeated, when my distress was very sharp and hard to bear; I say them now for others; but I cannot urge them for myself. You spoke to me after you had seen and watched me day by day. There was great consideration in that. You might have spoken, perhaps, more kindly; you might have tried to invite my confidence by greater gentleness; but the end would have been the same."

He shook his head in doubt, and not without some inward self-reproach.

"How can I hope," she said, "that your interposition would have prevailed with me, when I know how obdurate I was! I never thought at all; dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, I never thought at

:l; I had no thought, no heart, no care to find one, at that :ime. It has grown out of my trouble. I have felt it in my trouble. I would n't recall my trouble, such as it is, and has been — and it is light in comparison with trials which hundreds f good people suffer every day, I know — I would n't recall :t to-morrow, if I could. It has been my friend, for with- :t it, no one could have changed me; nothing could have anged me. Do not mistrust me because of these tears; I annot help them. I am grateful for it, in my soul. Indeed l am!"

"Indeed, she is!" said Mrs. Todgers. "I believe it, sir."

"And so do I!" said Mr. Chuzzlewit. "Now, attend to me, my dear. Your late husband's estate, if not wasted by the confession of a large debt to the broken office (which document, being useless to the runaways, has been sent over to England by them, not so much for the sake of the creditors as for the gratification of their dislike to him, whom they suppose to be still living), will be seized upon by law; for it is not exempt, as I learn, from the claims of those who have suffered by the fraud in which he was engaged. Your father's property was all, or nearly all, embarked in the same transaction. If there be any left, it will be seized on, in like manner. There is no home *there*."

"I could n't return to him," she said, with an instinctive reference to his having forced her marriage on. "I could not return to him!"

"I know it," Mr. Chuzzlewit resumed; "and I am here, because I know it. Come with me! From all who are about me, you are certain (I have ascertained it) of a generous welcome. But until your health is re-established, and you are sufficiently composed to bear that welcome, you shall have your abode in any quiet retreat of your own choosing, near London; not so far removed but that this kind-hearted lady may still visit you as often as she pleases. You have suffered much; but you are young, and have a brighter and a better future stretching out before you. Come with me. Your sister is careless of you, I know. She hurries on and publishes her marriage, in a spirit which (to say no more of it) is barely decent, is unsisterly, and bad. Leave the house before her guests arrive. She means to give you pain. Spare her the offence, and come with me!"

Mrs. Todgers, though most unwilling to part with her, added her persuasions. Even poor old Chuffey (of course included in the project) added his. She hurriedly attired herself, and was ready to depart, when Miss Pecksniff dashed into the room.

Miss Pecksniff dashed in so suddenly that she was placed in an embarrassing position. For, though she had completed her bridal toilette as to her head, on which she wore a bridal bonnet with orange flowers, she had not completed it as to her skirts, which displayed no choicer decoration than a dimity bedgown. She had dashed in, in fact, about halfway through, to console her sister in her affliction with a sight of the aforesaid bonnet; and being quite unconscious of the presence of a visitor, until she found Mr. Chuzzlewit standing face to face with her, her surprise was an uncomfortable one.

"So, young lady!" said the old man, eyeing her with strong disfavour. "You are to be married to-day!"

"Yes, sir," returned Miss Pecksniff modestly. "I am. I — my dress is rather — really, Mrs. Todgers!"

"Your delicacy," said old Martin, "is troubled, I perceive. I am not surprised to find it so. You have chosen the period of your marriage, unfortunately."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Chuzzlewit," retorted Cherry, very red and angry in a moment; "but if you have anything to say on that subject, I must beg to refer you to Augustus. You will scarcely think it manly, I hope, to force an argument on me, when Augustus is at all times ready to discuss it with you. I have nothing to do with any deceptions that may have been practised on my parent," said Miss Pecksniff pointedly; "and as I wish to be on good terms with everybody at such a time, I should have been glad if you would have favoured us with your company at breakfast. But I will not ask you as it is, seeing that you have been prepossessed and set against me in another quarter. I hope I have my natural affections for another quarter, and my natural pity for another quarter; but I cannot always submit to be subservient to it, Mr. Chuzzlewit. That would be a little too much. I trust I have more respect for myself, as well as for the man who claims me as his Bride."

"Your sister, meeting — as I think: not as she says, for she has said nothing about it — with little consideration from you, is going away with me," said Mr. Chuzzlewit.

"I am very happy to find that she has some good fortune at last," returned Miss Pecksniff, tossing her head. "I congratulate her, I am sure. I am not surprised that this event should be painful to her — painful to her — but I can't help that, Mr. Chuzzlewit. It 's not my fault."

"Come, Miss Pecksniff!" said the old man quietly. "I should like to see a better parting between you. I should like to see a better parting on your side, in such circumstances. It would make me your friend. You may want a friend one day or other."

"Every relation of life, Mr. Chuzzlewit, begging your pardon, and every friend in life," returned Miss Pecksniff, with dignity, "is now bound up and cemented in Augustus. So long as Augustus is my own, I cannot want a friend. When you speak of friends, sir, I must beg, once for all, to refer you to Augustus. That is my impression of the religious ceremony in which I am so soon to take a part at that altar to which Augustus will conduct me. I bear no malice at any time, much less in a moment of triumph, towards any one; much less towards my sister. On the contrary, I congratulate her. If you did n't hear me say so, I am not to blame. And as I owe it to Augustus to be punctual on an occasion when he may naturally be supposed to be — to be impatient — really, Mrs. Todgers! — I must beg your leave, sir, to retire."

After these words the bridal bonnet disappeared; with as much state as the dimity bedgown left in it.

Old Martin gave his arm to the younger sister without speaking, and led her out. Mrs. Todgers with her holiday garments fluttering in the wind, accompanied them to the carriage, clung round Merry's neck at parting, and ran back to her own dingy house, crying the whole way. She had a lean, lank body, Mrs. Todgers, but a well-conditioned soul within. Perhaps the good Samaritan was lean and lank, and found it hard to live. Who knows?

Mr. Chuzzlewit followed her so closely with his eyes that, until she had shut her own door, they did not encounter Mr. Tapley's face.

"Why, Mark!" he said, as soon as he observed it; "what 's the matter?"

"The wonderfullest ewent, sir!" returned Mark, pumping at his voice in a most laborious manner, and hardly able to

articulate with all his efforts. "A coincidence as never was equalled! I 'm blessed if here ain't two old neighbours of ourn, sir!"

"What neighbours?" cried old Martin, looking out of window. "Where?"

"I was a walkin' up and down not five yards from this spot," said Mr. Tapley, breathless, "and they come upon me like their own ghosts, as I thought they was! It 's the wonderfullest ewent that ever happened. Bring a feather, somebody, and knock me down with it!"

"What do you mean?" exclaimed old Martin, quite as much excited by the spectacle of Mark's excitement as that strange person was himself. "Neighbours, where?"

"Here, sir!" replied Mr. Tapley. "Here in the city of London! Here upon these very stones! Here they are, sir! Don't I know 'em? Lord love their welcome faces, don't I know 'em?"

With which ejaculations Mr. Tapley not only pointed to a decent-looking man and woman standing by, but commenced embracing them alternately, over and over again, in Monument Yard.

"Neighbours, WHERE?" old Martin shouted, almost maddened by his ineffectual efforts to get out at the coach door.

"Neighbours in America! Neighbours in Eden!" cried Mark. "Neighbours in the swamp, neighbours in the bush, neighbours in the fever. Did n't she nurse us? Did n't he help us? Should n't we both have died without 'em? Have n't they come a strugglin' back, without a single child for their consolation? And talk to me of neighbours!"

Away he went again, in a perfectly wild state, hugging them, and skipping round them, and cutting in between them, as if he were performing some frantic and outlandish dance.

Mr. Chuzzlewit no sooner gathered who these people were than he burst open the coach door somehow or other, and came tumbling out among them; and as if the lunacy of Mr. Tapley were contagious, he immediately began to shake hands, too, and exhibit every demonstration of the liveliest joy.

"Get up behind!" he said. "Get up in the rumble. Come along with me! Go you on the box, Mark. Home! Home!"

"Home!" cried Mr. Tapley, seizing the old man's hand in a burst of enthusiasm. "Exactly my opinion, sir. Home, for ever! Excuse the liberty, sir, I can't help it. Success to the Jolly Tapley! There's nothin' in the house they shan't have for the askin' for, except a bill. Home, to be sure! Hurrah!"

Home they rolled accordingly, when he had got the old man in again, as fast as they could go; Mark abating nothing of his fervour by the way, but allowing it to vent itself as unrestrainedly as if he had been on Salisbury Plain.

And now the wedding party began to assemble at Todgers's. Mr. Jinkins, the only boarder invited, was on the ground first. He wore a white favour in his button-hole, and a bran new extra super double-milled blue saxony dress-coat (that was its description in the bill), with a variety of tortuous embellishments about the pockets, invented by the artist to do honour to the day. The miserable Augustus no longer felt strongly even on the subject of Jinkins. He had n't strength of mind enough to do it. "Let him come!" he had said, in answer to Miss Pecksniff, when she urged the point. "Let him come! He has ever been my rock ahead through life. 'T is meet he should be there. Ha, ha! Oh, yes! let Jinkins come!"

Jinkins had come, with all the pleasure in life; and there he was. For some few minutes he had no companion but the breakfast, which was set forth in the drawing-room, with unusual taste and ceremony. But Mrs. Todgers soon joined him; and the bachelor cousin, the hairy young gentleman, and Mr. and Mrs. Spottletoe arrived in quick succession.

Mr. Spottletoe honoured Jinkins with an encouraging bow. "Glad to know you, sir," he said. "Give you joy!" Under the impression that Jinkins was the happy man.

Mr. Jinkins explained. He was merely doing the honours for his friend Moddle, who had ceased to reside in the house, and had not yet arrived.

"Not arrived, sir!" exclaimed Spottletoe in a great heat.

"Not yet," said Mr. Jinkins.

"Upon my soul!" cried Spottletoe. "He begins well! Upon my life and honour, this young man begins well! But I should very much like to know how it is that every one who comes into contact with this family is guilty of some gross

insult to it. Death! Not arrived yet! Not here to receive us!"

The nephew, with the outline of a countenance, suggested that perhaps he had ordered a new pair of boots, and they had n't come home.

"Don't talk to me of Boots, sir!" retorted Spottletoe, with immense indignation. "He is bound to come here in his slippers, then; he is bound to come here barefoot. Don't offer such a wretched and evasive plea to me, on behalf of your friend, as Boots, sir."

"He is not *my* friend," said the nephew. "I never saw him."

"Very well, sir," returned the fiery Spottletoe. "Then don't talk to me!"

The door was thrown open at this juncture, and Miss Pecksniff entered, tottering, and supported by her three bridesmaids. The strong-minded woman brought up the rear, having waited outside until now, for the purpose of spoiling the effect.

"How do you do, ma'am!" said Spottletoe to the strong-minded woman, in a tone of defiance. "I believe you see Mrs. Spottletoe, ma'am."

The strong-minded woman, with an air of great interest in Mrs. Spottletoe's health, regretted that she was not more easily seen; Nature erring, in that lady's case, upon the slim side.

"Mrs. Spottletoe is at least more easily seen than the bridegroom, ma'am," returned that lady's husband. "That is, unless he has confined his attentions to any particular part or branch of this family, which would be quite in keeping with its usual proceedings."

"If you allude to me, sir—" the strong-minded woman began.

"Pray," interposed Miss Pecksniff, "do not allow Augustus, at this awful moment of his life and mine, to be the means of disturbing that harmony which it is ever Augustus's and my wish to maintain. Augustus has not been introduced to any of my relations now present. He preferred not."

"Why, then, I venture to assert," cried Mr. Spottletoe, "that the man who aspires to join this family, and 'prefers not' to be introduced to its members, is an impertinent Puppy. That is my opinion of *him!*"

The strong-minded woman remarked with great suavity that she was afraid he must be. Her three daughters observed aloud that it was "Shameful!"

"You do not know Augustus," said Miss Pecksniff tearfully; "indeed, you do not know him. Augustus is all mildness and humility. Wait till you see Augustus, and I am sure he will conciliate your affections."

"The question arises," said Spottletoe, folding his arms, "how long we are to wait. I am not accustomed to wait; that 's the fact. And I want to know how long we are expected to wait."

"Mrs. Todgers!" said Charity, "Mr. Jinkins! I am afraid there must be some mistake. I think Augustus must have gone straight to the Altar!"

As such a thing was possible, and the church was close at hand, Mr. Jinkins ran off to see, accompanied by Mr. George Chuzzlewit the bachelor cousin, who preferred anything to the aggravation of sitting near the breakfast, without being able to eat it. But they came back with no other tidings than a familiar message from the clerk importing that if they wanted to be married that morning they had better look sharp, as the curate was n't going to wait there all day.

The bride was now alarmed — seriously alarmed. Good Heavens, what could have happened! Augustus! Dear Augustus!

Mr. Jinkins volunteered to take a cab, and seek him at the newly furnished house. The strong-minded woman administered comfort to Miss Pecksniff. It was a specimen of what she had to expect. It would do her good. It would dispel the romance of the affair. The red-nosed daughters also administered the kindest comfort. "Perhaps he 'd come," they said. The sketchy nephew hinted that he might have fallen off a bridge. The wrath of Mr. Spottletoe resisted all the entreaties of his wife. Everybody spoke at once, and Miss Pecksniff, with clasped hands, sought consolation everywhere and found it nowhere, when Jinkins, having met the postman at the door, came back with a letter, which he put into her hand.

Miss Pecksniff opened it; glanced at it; uttered a piercing shriek; threw it down upon the ground; and fainted away.

They picked it up; and crowding round, and looking over one another's shoulders, read, in the words and dashes following, this communication: —

"OFF GRAVESEND.
"CLIPPER SCHOONER, CUPID.
"*Wednesday night.*

"EVER INJURED MISS PECKSNIFF: —

"Ere this reaches you, the undersigned will be — if not a corpse — on the way to Van Diemen's Land. Send not in pursuit. I never will be taken alive!

"The burden — 300 tons per register — forgive, if in my distraction, I allude to the ship — on my mind — has been truly dreadful. Frequently — when you have sought to soothe my brow with kisses — has self-destruction flashed across me. Frequently — incredible as it may seem — have I abandoned the idea.

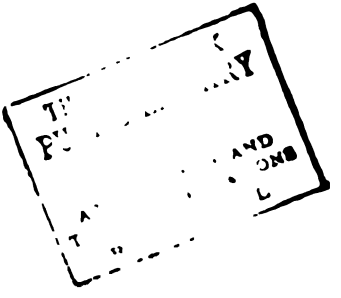
"I love another. She is Another's. Everything appears to be somebody else's. Nothing in the world is mine — not even my Situation — which I have forfeited — by my rash conduct — in running away.

"If you ever loved me, hear my last appeal! The last appeal of a miserable and blighted exile. Forward the inclosed — it is the key of my desk — to the office — by hand. Please address to Bobbs and Cholberry — I mean to Chobbs and Bolberry — but my mind is totally unhinged. I left a penknife — with a buckhorn handle — in your work-box. It will repay the messenger. May it make him happier than ever it did me!

"Oh, Miss Pecksniff, why did n't you leave me alone! Was it not cruel, *cruel!* Oh, my goodness, have you not been a witness of my feelings — have you not seen them flowing from my eyes — did you not, yourself, reproach me with weeping more than usual on that dreadful night when last we met — in that house — where I once was peaceful — though blighted — in the society of Mrs. Todgers!

"But it was written — in the Talmud — that you should involve yourself in the inscrutable and gloomy Fate which it is my mission to accomplish, and which wreathes itself — e'en now — about my — temples. I will not reproach, for I have wronged you. May the Furniture make some amends!

"Farewell! Be the proud bride of a ducal coronet, and



forget me! Long may it be before you know the anguish with which I now subscribe myself — amid the tempestuous howlings of the — sailors,

"Unalterably,
"Never yours,
"AUGUSTUS."

They thought as little of Miss Pecksniff, while they greedily perused this letter, as if she were the very last person on earth whom it concerned. But Miss Pecksniff really had fainted away. The bitterness of her mortification; the bitterness of having summoned witnesses, and such witnesses, to behold it; the bitterness of knowing that the strong-minded woman and the red-nosed daughters towered triumphant in this hour of their anticipated overthrow, was too much to be borne. Miss Pecksniff had fainted away in earnest.

What sounds are these that fall so grandly on the ear? What darkening room is this?

And that mild figure seated at an organ, who is he? Ah, Tom, dear Tom, old friend!

Thy head is prematurely grey, though Time has passed between thee and our old association, Tom. But in those sounds with which it is thy wont to bear the twilight company, the music of thy heart speaks out — the story of thy life relates itself.

Thy life is tranquil, calm, and happy, Tom. In the soft strain which ever and again comes stealing back upon the ear, the memory of thine old love may find a voice, perhaps; but it is a pleasant, softened, whispering memory, like that in which we sometimes hold the dead, and does not pain or grieve thee, God be thanked!

Touch the notes lightly, Tom, as lightly as thou wilt, but never will thine hand fall half so lightly on that instrument as on the head of thine old tyrant brought down very, very low; and never will it make as hollow a response to any touch of thine, as he does always.

For a drunken, begging, squalid, letter-writing man, called Pecksniff, with a shrewish daughter, haunts thee, Tom; and when he makes appeals to thee for cash, reminds thee that he built thy fortunes better than his own; and when he spends it,

AMERICAN NOTES

FOR GENERAL CIRCULATION

CHAPTER I

GOING AWAY

I SHALL never forget the one-fourth serious and three-fourths comical astonishment, with which, on the morning of the third of January, eighteen hundred and forty-two, I opened the door of, and put my head into, a "state-room" on board the Britannia steam-packet, twelve hundred tons burthen per register, bound for Halifax and Boston, and carrying Her Majesty's mails.

That this state-room had been specially engaged for "Charles Dickens, Esquire, and Lady," was rendered sufficiently clear even to my scared intellect by a very small manuscript, announcing the fact, which was pinned on a very flat quilt, covering a very thin mattress, spread like a surgical plaster on a most inaccessible shelf. But that this was the state-room concerning which Charles Dickens, Esquire, and Lady, had held daily and nightly conferences for at least four months preceding; that this could by any possibility be that small snug chamber of the imagination, which Charles Dickens, Esquire, with the spirit of prophecy strong upon him, had always foretold would contain at least one little sofa, and which his lady, with a modest yet most magnificent sense of its limited dimensions, had from the first opined would not hold more than two enormous portmanteaus in some odd corner out of sight (portmanteaus which could now no more be got in at the door, not to say stowed away, than a giraffe could be persuaded or forced into a flower-pot); that this utterly impracticable, thoroughly hopeless, and profoundly preposterous box, had the remotest reference to, or connection with, those chaste and pretty, not

to say gorgeous little bowers, sketched by a masterly hand, in the highly varnished lithographic plan hanging up in the agent's counting-house in the city of London; that this room of state, in short, could be anything but a pleasant fiction and cheerful jest of the captain's, invented and put in practice for the better relish and enjoyment of the real state-room presently to be disclosed: — these were truths which I really could not, for the moment, bring my mind at all to bear upon or comprehend. And I sat down upon a kind of horsehair slab, or perch, of which there were two within; and looked, without any expression of countenance whatever, at some friends who had come on board with us, and who were crushing their faces into all manner of shapes by endeavouring to squeeze them through the small doorway.

We had experienced a pretty smart shock before coming below, which, but that we were the most sanguine people living, might have prepared us for the worst. The imaginative artist to whom I have already made allusion, has depicted in the same great work a chamber of almost interminable perspective, furnished, as Mr. Robins would say, in a style of more than Eastern splendour, and filled (but not inconveniently so) with groups of ladies and gentlemen, in the very highest state of enjoyment and vivacity. Before descending into the bowels of the ship, we had passed from the deck into a long narrow apartment, not unlike a gigantic hearse with windows in the sides; having at the upper end a melancholy stove, at which three or four chilly stewards were warming their hands, while on either side, extending down its whole dreary length, was a long, long table, over each of which a rack, fixed to the low roof, and stuck full of drinking-glasses and cruet-stands, hinted dismally at rolling seas, and heavy weather. I had not at that time seen the ideal presentment of this chamber which has since gratified me so much, but I observed that one of our friends, who had made the arrangements for our voyage, turned pale on entering, retreated on the friend behind him, smote his forehead involuntarily, and said below his breath, "Impossible! it cannot be!" or words to that effect. He recovered himself however by a great effort, and, after a preparatory cough or two, cried, with a ghastly smile which is still before me, looking at the same time round the walls, "Ha! the breakfast-room, steward — eh?" We all

saw what the answer must be: we knew the agony he dered. He had often spoken of *the saloon;* had taken in l lived upon the pictorial idea; had usually given us to derstand, at home, that to form a just conception of it it ld be necessary to multiply the size and furniture of an linary drawing-room by seven, and then fall short of the lity. When the man in reply avowed the truth — the blunt, rseless, naked truth — "This is the saloon, sir" — he lly reeled beneath the blow.

In persons who were so soon to part, and interpose between ir else daily communication the formidable barrier of many usand miles of stormy space, and who were for that reason xious to cast no other cloud, not even the passing shadow of moment's disappointment or discomfiture, upon the short erval of happy companionship that yet remained to them — persons so situated, the natural transition from these first prises was obviously into peals of hearty laughter; and I report that I, for one, being still seated upon the slab or ch before mentioned, roared outright until the vessel rang in. Thus, in less than two minutes after coming upon it r the first time, we all by common consent agreed that this te-room was the pleasantest and most facetious and capital trivance possible; and that to have had it one inch larger ld have been quite a disagreeable and deplorable state of ings. And with this, and with showing how, — by very rly closing the door, and twining in and out like serpents, l by counting the little washing slab as standing-room, — we could manage to insinuate four people into it, all at one e; and entreating each other to observe how very airy it s (in dock), and how there was a beautiful port-hole which ld be kept open all day (weather permitting), and how there s quite a large bull's eye just over the looking-glass which ld render shaving a perfectly easy and delightful process when the ship did n't roll too much), we arrived, at last, at e unanimous conclusion that it was rather spacious than erwise; though I do verily believe that, deducting the two rths, one above the other, than which nothing smaller for ping in was ever made except coffins, it was no bigger than e of those hackney cabriolets which have the door behind, l shoot their fares out, like sacks of coals, upon the pave-nt.

Having settled this point to the perfect satisfaction of all parties, concerned and unconcerned, we sat down round the fire in the ladies' cabin — just to try the effect. It was rather dark, certainly; but somebody said, "Of course it would be light at sea," a proposition to which we all assented, echoing "of course, of course;" though it would be exceedingly difficult to say why we thought so. I remember, too, when we had discovered and exhausted another topic of consolation in the circumstance of this ladies' cabin adjoining our state-room, and the consequently immense feasibility of sitting there at all times and seasons, and had fallen into a momentary silence, leaning our faces on our hands and looking at the fire, one of our party said, with the solemn air of a man who had made a discovery, "What a relish mulled claret will have down here!" which appeared to strike us all most forcibly, as though there were something spicy and high-flavoured in cabins which essentially improved that composition and rendered it quite incapable of perfection anywhere else.

There was a stewardess, too, actively engaged in producing clean sheets and tablecloths from the very entrails of the sofas, and from unexpected lockers, of such artful mechanism that it made one's head ache to see them opened one after another, and rendered it quite a distracting circumstance to follow her proceedings, and to find that every nook and corner and individual piece of furniture was something else besides what it pretended to be, and was a mere trap and deception and place of secret stowage, whose ostensible purpose was its least useful one.

God bless that stewardess for her piously fraudulent account of January voyages! God bless her for her clear recollection of the companion passage of last year, when nobody was ill, and everybody danced from morning to night, and it was "a run" of twelve days, and a piece of the purest frolic, and delight, and jollity! All happiness be with her for her bright face and her pleasant Scotch tongue, which had sounds of old Home in it for my fellow-traveller; and for her predictions of fair winds and fine weather (all wrong, or I should n't be half so fond of her); and for the ten thousand small fragments of genuine womanly tact, by which, without piecing them elaborately together, and patching them up into shape and form and case and pointed application, she nevertheless did plainly show

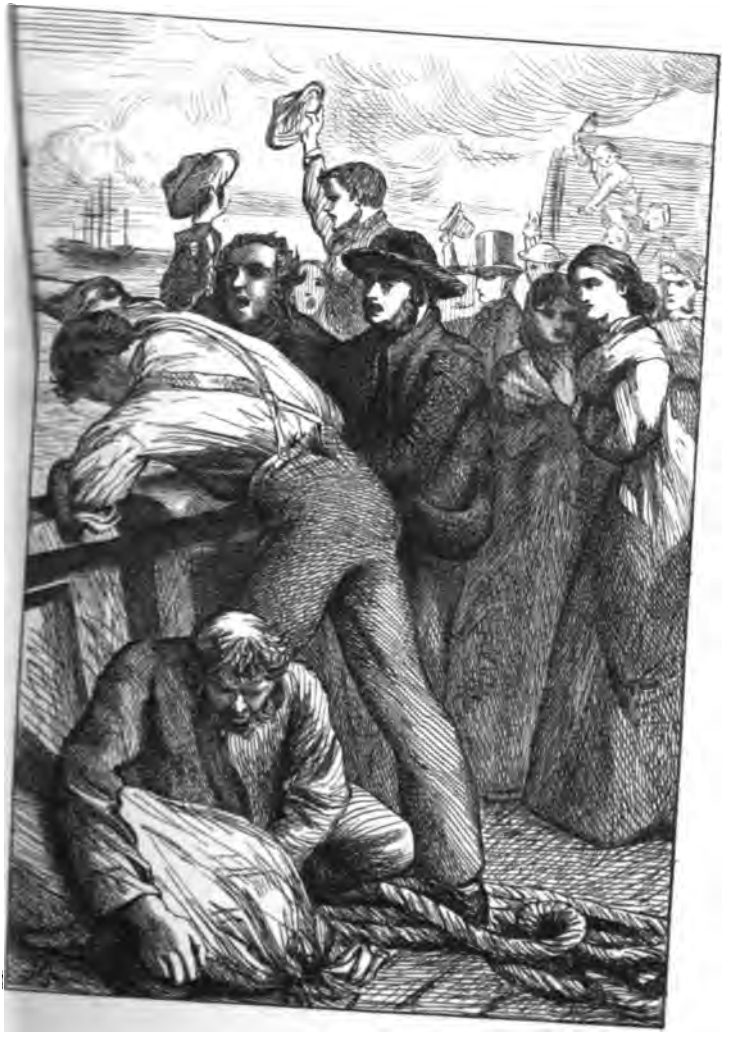
: all young mothers on one side of the Atlantic were near
: close at hand to their little children left upon the other;
: that what seemed to the uninitiated a serious journey
, to those who were in the secret, a mere frolic, to be sung
t and whistled at! Light be her heart, and gay her merry
, for years!

The state-room had grown pretty fast; but by this time it
l expanded into something quite bulky, and almost boasted
a bay-window to view the sea from. So we went upon deck
n in high spirits; and there everything was in such a state
of bustle and active preparation that the blood quickened its
, and whirled through one's veins on that clear frosty
ning with involuntary mirthfulness. For every gallant ship
riding slowly up and down, and every little boat was plash-
noisily in the water; and knots of people stood upon the
arf, gazing with a kind of "dread delight" on the far-famed
American steamer; and one party of men were "taking in
milk," or, in other words, getting the cow on board; and
ther were filling the icehouses to the very throat with fresh
visions; with butchers' meat and garden stuff, pale suck-
pigs, calves' heads in scores, beef, veal, and pork, and
ultry out of all proportion; and others were coiling ropes,
l busy with oakum yarns; and others were lowering heavy
kages into the hold; and the purser's head was barely visi-
as it loomed in a state of exquisite perplexity from the
st of a vast pile of passengers' luggage; and there seemed
be nothing going on anywhere, or uppermost in the mind of
body, but preparations for this mighty voyage. This, with
bright cold sun, the bracing air, the crisply curling water,
thin white crust of morning ice upon the decks, which
ckled with a sharp and cheerful sound beneath the lightest
ead, was irresistible. And when, again upon the shore, we
rned and saw from the vessel's mast her name signalled in
gs of joyous colours, and fluttering by their side the beauti-
l American banner with its stars and stripes, — the long three
thousand miles and more, and, longer still, the six whole
nths of absence, so dwindled and faded that the ship had
ne out and come home again, and it was broad spring already
in the Coburg Dock at Liverpool.

I have not inquired among my medical acquaintance,
whether Turtle, and cold Punch, with Hock, Champagne, and

Claret, and all the slight et cetera usually included in an unlimited order for a good dinner — especially when it is left to the liberal construction of my faultless friend, Mr. Radley of the Adelphi Hotel — are peculiarly calculated to suffer a sea change; or whether a plain mutton chop, and a glass or two of sherry, would be less likely of conversion into foreign and disconcerting material. My own opinion is that whether one is discreet or indiscreet in these particulars, on the eve of a sea voyage, is a matter of little consequence; and that, to use a common phrase, "it comes to very much the same thing in the end." Be this as it may, I know that the dinner of that day was undeniably perfect; that it comprehended all these items, and a great many more; and that we all did ample justice to it. And I know, too, that, bating a certain tacit avoidance of any allusion to to-morrow, such as may be supposed to prevail between delicate-minded turnkeys and a sensitive prisoner who is to be hanged next morning, we got on very well, and, all things considered, were merry enough.

When the morning — *the* morning — came, and we met at breakfast, it was curious to see how eager we all were to prevent a moment's pause in the conversation, and how astoundingly gay everybody was; the forced spirits of each member of the little party having as much likeness to his natural mirth as hot-house peas at five guineas the quart resemble in flavour the growth of the dews, and air, and rain of Heaven. But as one o'clock, the hour for going aboard, drew near, this volubility dwindled away by little and little, despite the most persevering efforts to the contrary, until at last, the matter being now quite desperate, we threw off all disguise; openly speculated upon where we should be this time to-morrow, this time next day, and so forth; and entrusted a vast number of messages to those who intended returning to town that night, which were to be delivered at home and elsewhere without fail, within the very shortest possible space of time after the arrival of the railway train at Euston Square. And commissions and remembrances do so crowd upon one at such a time that we were still busied with this employment when we found ourselves fused, as it were, into a dense conglomeration of passengers and passengers' friends and passengers' luggage, all jumbled together on the deck of a small steamboat, and panting and snorting off to the packet, which had worked out of



dock yesterday afternoon, and was now lying at her moorings in the river.

And there she is! All eyes are turned to where she lies, dimly discernible through the gathering fog of the early winter afternoon; every finger is pointed in the same direction; and murmurs of interest and admiration — as, "How beautiful she looks!" "How trim she is!" — are heard on every side. Even the lazy gentleman, with his hat on one side and his hands in his pockets, who has dispensed so much consolation by inquiring with a yawn of another gentleman whether he is "going across" — as if it were a ferry — even he condescends to look that way, and nod his head, as who should say, "No mistake about *that;*" and not even the sage Lord Burleigh in his nod included half so much as this lazy gentleman of might who has made the passage (as everybody on board has found out already; it's impossible to say how) thirteen times without a single accident! There is another passenger very much wrapped up, who has been frowned down by the rest, and morally trampled upon and crushed, for presuming to inquire with a timid interest how long it is since the poor President went down. He is standing close to the lazy gentleman, and says with a faint smile that he believes She is a very strong Ship; to which the lazy gentleman, looking first in his questioner's eye and then very hard in the wind's, answers unexpectedly and ominously that She need be. Upon this the lazy gentleman instantly falls very low in the popular estimation, and the passengers, with looks of defiance, whisper to each other that he is an ass, and an impostor, and clearly does n't know anything at all about it.

But we are made fast alongside the packet, whose huge red funnel is smoking bravely, giving rich promise of serious intentions. Packing-cases, portmanteaus, carpet-bags, and boxes, are already passed from hand to hand, and hauled on board with breathless rapidity. The officers, smartly dressed, are at the gangway handing the passengers up the side, and hurrying the men. In five minutes' time, the little steamer is utterly deserted, and the packet is beset and overrun by its late freight, who instantly pervade the whole ship, and are to be met with by the dozen in every nook and corner; swarming down below with their own baggage, and stumbling over other people's; disposing themselves comfortably in wrong cabins,

and creating a most horrible confusion by having to turn out again; madly bent upon opening locked doors, and on forcing a passage into all kinds of out-of-the-way places where there is no thoroughfare; sending wild stewards, with elfin hair, to and fro upon the breezy decks on unintelligible errands, impossible of execution; and in short, creating the most extraordinary and bewildering tumult. In the midst of all this, the lazy gentleman, who seems to have no luggage of any kind, — not so much as a friend, even, — lounges up and down the hurricane-deck, coolly puffing a cigar; and as this unconcerned demeanour again exalts him in the opinion of those who have leisure to observe his proceedings, every time he looks up at the masts, or down at the decks, or over the side, they look there, too, as wondering whether he sees anything wrong anywhere, and hoping that, in case he should, he will have the goodness to mention it.

What have we here? The captain's boat! and yonder the captain himself. Now, by all our hopes and wishes, the very man he ought to be! A well-made, tight-built, dapper little fellow, with a ruddy face, which is a letter of invitation to shake him by both hands at once; and with a clear, blue, honest eye that it does one good to see one's sparkling image in. "Ring the bell!" "Ding, ding, ding!" the very bell is in a hurry. "Now for the shore — who 's for the shore?" — "These gentlemen, I am sorry to say." They are away, and never said, Good bye. Ah! now they wave it from the little boat. "Good bye! Good bye!" Three cheers from them, three more from us; three more from them; and they are gone.

To and fro, to and fro, to and fro again a hundred times! This waiting for the latest mail-bags is worse than all. If we could have gone off in the midst of that last burst, we should have started triumphantly; but to lie here, two hours and more, in the damp fog, neither staying at home nor going abroad, is letting one gradually down into the very depths of dulness and low spirits. A speck in the mist, at last! That 's something. It is the boat we wait for! That 's more to the purpose. The captain appears on the paddle-box with his speaking trumpet; the officers take their stations; all hands are on the alert; the flagging hopes of the passengers revive: the cooks pause in their savoury work, and look out with faces

full of interest. The boat comes alongside; the bags are dragged in anyhow, and flung down for the moment anywhere. Three cheers more; and as the first one rings upon our ears, the vessel throbs like a strong giant that has just received the breath of life; the two great wheels turn fiercely round for the first time; and the noble ship, with wind and tide astern, breaks proudly through the lashed and foaming water.

CHAPTER II

THE PASSAGE OUT

We all dined together that day; and a rather formidable party we were: no fewer than eighty-six strong. The vessel being pretty deep in the water, with all her coals on board and so many passengers, and the weather being calm and quiet, there was but little motion; so that, before the dinner was half over, even those passengers who were most distrustful of themselves plucked up amazingly; and those who in the morning had returned to the universal question, "Are you a good sailor?" a very decided negative, now either parried the inquiry with the evasive reply, "Oh! I suppose I 'm no worse than anybody else;" or, reckless of all moral obligations, answered boldly, "Yes;" and with some irritation, too, as though they would add, "I should like to know what you see in *me*, sir, particularly, to justify suspicion!"

Notwithstanding this high tone of courage and confidence, I could not but observe that very few remained long over their wine; and that everybody had an unusual love of the open air; and that the favourite and most coveted seats were invariably those nearest to the door. The tea-table, too, was by no means so well attended as the dinner-table; and there was less whist-playing than might have been expected. Still, with the exception of one lady, who had retired with some precipitation at dinner-time, immediately after being assisted to the finest cut of a very yellow boiled leg of mutton with very green capers, there were no invalids as yet; and walking, and smoking, and drinking of brandy and water (but always in the open air), went on with unabated spirit, until eleven o'clock or thereabouts, when "turning in" — no sailor of seven hours' experience talks of going to bed — became the order of the night. The perpetual tramp of boot-heels on the decks gave place to a heavy silence, and the whole human freight was stowed away below, excepting a very few stragglers, like myself, who were probably, like me, afraid to go there.

To one unaccustomed to such scenes, this is a very striking time on shipboard. Afterwards, and when its novelty had long worn off, it never ceased to have a peculiar interest and charm for me. The gloom through which the great black mass holds its direct and certain course; the rushing water, plainly heard, but dimly seen; the broad, white, glistening track, that follows in the vessel's wake; the men on the look-out forward, who would be scarcely visible against the dark sky but for their blotting out some score of glistening stars; the helmsman at the wheel, with the illuminated card before him, shining, a speck of light amidst the darkness, like something sentient and of Divine intelligence; the melancholy sighing of the wind through block, and rope, and chain; the streaming forth of light from every crevice, nook, and tiny piece of glass about the decks, as though the ship were filled with fire in hiding, ready to burst through any outlet, wild with its resistless power of death and ruin. At first, too, and even when the hour, and all the objects it exalts, have come to be familiar, it is difficult, alone and thoughtful, to hold them to their proper shapes and forms. They change with the wandering fancy; assume the semblance of things left far away; put on the well-remembered aspect of favourite places dearly loved; and even people them with shadows. Streets, houses, rooms, figures so like their usual occupants that they have startled me by their reality, which far exceeded, as it seemed to me, all power of mine to conjure up the absent, have, many and many a time, at such an hour, grown suddenly out of objects with whose real look, and use, and purpose, I was as well acquainted as with my own two hands.

My own two hands, and feet likewise, being very cold, however, on this particular occasion, I crept below at midnight. It was not exactly comfortable below. It was decidedly close; and it was impossible to be unconscious of the presence of that extraordinary compound of strange smells, which is to be found nowhere but on board ship, and which is such a subtle perfume that it seems to enter at every pore of the skin, and whisper of the hold. Two passengers' wives (one of them my own) lay already in silent agonies on the sofa; and one lady's maid (*my* lady's) was a mere bundle on the floor, execrating her destiny, and pounding her curl-papers among the stray boxes. Everything sloped the wrong way,

which in itself was an aggravation scarcely to be borne. had left the door open, a moment before, in the be . gentle declivity, and, when I turned to shut it, it was summit of a lofty eminence. Now every plank and . creaked, as if the ship were made of wicker-work and . crackled, like an enormous fire of the driest p . . There was nothing for it but bed; so I went to bed.

It was pretty much the same for the next two days, w . tolerably fair wind and dry weather. I read in bed . this hour I don't know what) a good deal, and rested a little; drank cold brandy and water with an . disgust, and ate hard biscuit perseveringly: not . . to be.

It is the third morning. I am awakened out of a . by a dismal shriek from my wife, who demands to know whether there 's any danger. I rouse myself, and look bed. The water-jug is plunging and leaping like a dolphin; all the smaller articles are afloat, except my which are stranded on a carpet-bag, high and dry, like a of coal-barges. Suddenly I see them spring into the air behold the looking-glass, which is nailed to the wall, fast upon the ceiling. At the same time the door disappears, and a new one is opened in the floor. I begin to comprehend that the state-room is standing on head.

Before it is possible to make any arrangement at all compatible with this novel state of things, the ship rights. No one can say, "Thank Heaven!" she wrongs again. Before can cry she *is* wrong, she seems to have started forward to be a creature actively running of its own accord, with broken knees and failing legs, through every variety of and pitfall, and stumbling constantly. Before one can wonder, she takes a high leap into the air. Before she well done that, she takes a deep dive into the water. Before she has gained the surface, she throws a somersault; instant she is on her legs, she rushes backward. And pass on staggering, heaving, wrestling, leaping, diving, ing, pitching, throbbing, rolling, and rushing, and through all these movements, sometimes by turns, and times all together, until one feels disposed to roar for mercy.

A steward passes. "Steward!" "Sir!" "What

matter? what *do* you call this?" "Rather a heavy sea on, sir, and a head-wind."

A head-wind! Imagine a human face upon the vessel's prow, with fifteen thousand Samsons in one bent upon driving her back, and hitting her exactly between the eyes whenever she attempts to advance an inch. Imagine the ship herself, with every pulse and artery of her huge body swollen and bursting under this maltreatment, sworn to go on or die. Imagine the wind howling, the sea roaring, the rain beating, all in furious array against her. Picture the sky both dark and wild, and the clouds, in fearful sympathy with the waves, making another ocean in the air. Add to all this the clattering on deck and down below; the tread of hurried feet; the loud hoarse shouts of seamen; the gurgling in and out of water through the scuppers; with, every now and then, the striking of a heavy sea upon the planks above, with the deep, dead, heavy sound of thunder heard within a vault; — and there is the head-wind of that January morning.

I say nothing of what may be called the domestic noises of the ship, such as the breaking of glass and crockery, the tumbling down of stewards, the gambols, overhead, of loose casks and truant dozens of bottled porter, and the very remarkable and far from exhilarating sounds raised in their various state-rooms by the seventy passengers who were too ill to get up to breakfast. I say nothing of them; for although I lay listening to this concert for three or four days, I don't think I heard it for more than a quarter of a minute, at the expiration of which term, I lay down again, excessively sea-sick.

Not sea-sick, be it understood, in the ordinary acceptation of the term — I wish I had been; but in a form which I have never seen or heard described, though I have no doubt it is very common. I lay there, all the day long, quite coolly and contentedly; with no sense of weariness, with no desire to get up, or get better, or take the air; with no curiosity, or care, or regret, of any sort or degree, saving that I think I can remember, in this universal indifference, having a kind of lazy joy — of fiendish delight, if anything so lethargic can be dignified with the title — in the fact of my wife being too ill to talk to me. If I may be allowed to illustrate my state of mind by such an example, I should say that I was exactly in the condition of the elder Mr. Willet, after the incursion of the rioters

into his bar at Chigwell. Nothing would have surprised me. If, in the momentary illumination of any ray of intelligence that may have come upon me in the way of thoughts of Home, a goblin postman, with a scarlet coat and bell, had come into that little kennel before me, broad awake in broad day, and, apologising for being damp through walking in the sea, had handed me a letter, directed to myself, in familiar characters, I am certain I should not have felt one atom of astonishment: I should have been perfectly satisfied. If Neptune himself had walked in, with a toasted shark on his trident, I should have looked upon the event as one of the very commonest everyday occurrences.

Once — once — I found myself on deck. I don't know how I got there, or what possessed me to go there, but there I was; and completely dressed, too, with a huge pea-coat on, and a pair of boots such as no weak man in his senses could ever have got into. I found myself standing, when a gleam of consciousness came upon me, holding on to something. I don't know what. I think it was the boatswain: or it may have been the pump: or possibly the cow. I can't say how long I had been there; whether a day or a minute. I recollect trying to think about something (about anything in the whole wide world, I was not particular), without the smallest effect. I could not even make out which was the sea, and which the sky; for the horizon seemed drunk, and was flying wildly about, in all directions. Even in that incapable state, however, I recognised the lazy gentleman standing before me, nautically clad in a suit of shaggy blue, with an oilskin hat. But I was too imbecile, although I knew it to be he, to separate him from his dress; and tried to call him, I remember, *Pilot*. After another interval of total unconsciousness, I found he had gone, and recognised another figure in its place. It seemed to wave and fluctuate before me as though I saw it reflected in an unsteady looking-glass; but I knew it for the captain; and such was the cheerful influence of his face, that I tried to smile — yes, even then I tried to smile. I saw by his gestures that he addressed me; but it was a long time before I could make out that he remonstrated against my standing up to my knees in water — as I was; of course I don't know why. I tried to thank him, but could n't. I could only point to my boots — or wherever I supposed my boots to

— and say in a plaintive voice, "Cork soles;" at the same time endeavouring, I am told, to sit down in the pool. Finding that I was quite insensible, and for the time a maniac, he humanely conducted me below.

There I remained until I got better; suffering, whenever I was recommended to eat anything, an amount of anguish only second to that which is said to be endured by the apparently drowned in the process of restoration to life. One gentleman on board had a letter of introduction to me from a mutual friend in London. He sent it below with his card, on the morning of the head-wind; and I was long troubled with the idea that he might be up, and well, and a hundred times a day expecting me to call upon him in the saloon. I imagined him one of those cast-iron images — I will not call them men — who ask, with red faces and lusty voices, what sea-sickness means, and whether it really is as bad as it is represented to be. This was very torturing, indeed; and I don't think I ever felt such perfect gratification and gratitude of heart, as I did when I heard from the ship's doctor that he had been obliged to put a large mustard poultice on this very gentleman's stomach. I date my recovery from the receipt of that intelligence.

It was materially assisted, though, I have no doubt, by a heavy gale of wind, which came slowly up at sunset, when we were about ten days out, and raged with gradually increasing fury until morning, saving that it lulled for an hour a little before midnight. There was something in the unnatural repose of that hour, and in the after gathering of the storm, so inconceivably awful and tremendous that its bursting into full violence was almost a relief.

The labouring of the ship in the troubled sea on this night I shall never forget. "Will it ever be worse than this?" was a question I had often heard asked, when everything was sliding and bumping about, and when it certainly did seem difficult to comprehend the possibility of anything afloat being more disturbed, without toppling over and going down. But what the agitation of a steam-vessel is, on a bad winter's night in the wild Atlantic, it is impossible for the most vivid imagination to conceive. To say that she is flung down on her side in the waves, with her masts dipping into them, and that, springing up again, she rolls over on the other side, until a

heavy sea strikes her with the noise of a hundred great guns, and hurls her back — that she stops, and staggers, and reels as though stunned, and then, with a violent throbbing at her heart, darts onward like a monster goaded into madness; beaten down, and battered, and crushed, and leaped over by the angry sea — that thunder, lightning, hail, and rain, all at once are all in fierce contention for the mastery — that every plank has its groan, every nail its shriek, and every drop of water in the great ocean its howling voice — is nothing. It is all this, is grand, and all appalling and horrible in the last degree, is nothing. Words cannot express it. Thoughts cannot grasp it. Only a dream can call it up again, in all its fury, rage, and passion.

And yet, in the very midst of these terrors, I was conscious of a situation so exquisitely ridiculous that even then I had as strong a sense of its absurdity as I have now; and could no more help laughing than I can at any other comic thing happening under circumstances the most favourable to entertainment. About midnight we shipped a sea, which forced its way through the skylights, burst open the doors above, and came raging and roaring down into the ladies' cabin, to the unspeakable consternation of my wife and a little Scotch lady — who, by the way, had previously sent a message to the captain by the stewardess, requesting him, with her compliments, to have a steel conductor immediately attached to the top of every mast, and to the chimney, in order that the ship might not be struck by lightning. They, and the handmaid before mentioned, being in such ecstasies of fear that I scarcely knew what to do with them, I naturally bethought myself of some restorative or comfortable cordial; and nothing better occurred to me, at the moment, than hot brandy and water. I procured a tumblerful without delay. It being impossible to stand without holding on, they were all heaped together in one corner of a long sofa — a fixture extending entirely across the cabin — where they clung to each other in momentary expectation of being drowned. When I approached this place with my medicine, and was about to administer it, with many consolatory expressions, to the nearest sufferer, what was my dismay to see them all roll slowly down to the other end! And when I suggested to that end, and held out the glass once more, how manifestly baffled were my good intentions by the same

another lurch, and their all rolling back again! I suppose I dodged them up and down this sofa for at least a quarter of an hour, without reaching them once; and by the time I did catch them, the brandy and water was diminished, by constant spilling, to a teaspoonful. To complete the group, it is necessary to recognize in this disconcerted dodger an individual very pale from sea-sickness, who had shaved his beard and brushed his hair, last, at Liverpool; and whose only articles of dress (linen not included) were a pair of dreadnought trousers, a blue jacket, formerly admired upon the Thames at Richmond, no stockings, and one slipper.

Of the outrageous antics performed by that ship next morning, which made bed a practical joke, and getting up, by any process short of falling out, an impossibility, I say nothing. But anything like the utter dreariness and desolation that met my eyes, when I literally "tumbled up" on deck at noon, I never saw. Ocean and sky were all of one dull, heavy, uniform, lead colour. There was no extent of prospect even over the dreary waste that lay around us, for the sea ran high, and the horizon encompassed us like a large black hoop. Viewed from the air, or some tall bluff on shore, it would have been imposing and stupendous, no doubt; but seen from the wet and rolling decks, it only impressed one giddily and painfully. In the gale of last night the life-boat had been crushed by one blow of the sea like a walnut-shell; and there it hung dangling in the air, a mere fagot of crazy boards. The planking of the paddle-boxes had been torn sheer away. The wheels were exposed and bare; and they whirled and dashed their spray about the decks at random. Chimney, white with crusted salt; topmasts struck; storm-sails set; rigging all knotted, tangled, wet, and drooping: a gloomier picture it would be hard to look upon.

I was now comfortably established by courtesy in the ladies' cabin, where, besides ourselves, there were only four other passengers. First, the little Scotch lady before mentioned, on her way to join her husband at New York, who had settled there three years before. Secondly and thirdly, an honest young Yorkshireman, connected with some American house, domiciled in that same city, and carrying thither his beautiful young wife, to whom he had been married but a fortnight, and who was the fairest specimen of a comely English country girl I have ever

seen. Fourthly, fifthly, and lastly, another couple, — newly married, too, if one might judge from the endearments they frequently interchanged, — of whom I know no more than that they were rather a mysterious, runaway kind of couple; that the lady had great personal attractions also; and that the gentleman carried more guns with him than Robinson Crusoe, wore a shooting-coat, and had two great dogs on board. On further consideration, I remember that he tried hot roast pig and bottled ale as a cure for sea-sickness; and that he took these remedies (usually in bed) day after day, with astonishing perseverance. I may add, for the information of the curious, that they decidedly failed.

The weather continuing obstinately and almost unprecedentedly bad, we usually straggled into this cabin, more or less faint and miserable, about an hour before noon, and lay down on the sofas to recover; during which interval, the captain would look in to communicate the state of the wind, the moral certainty of its changing to-morrow (the weather is always going to improve to-morrow, at sea), the vessel's rate of sailing, and so forth. Observations there were none to tell us of, for there was no sun to take them by. But a description of one day will serve for all the rest. Here it is.

The captain being gone, we compose ourselves to read, if the place be light enough; and if not, we doze and talk alternately. At one, a bell rings, and the stewardess comes down with a steaming dish of baked potatoes, and another of roasted apples; and plates of pig's face, cold ham, salt beef; or perhaps a smoking mess of rare hot collops. We fall to upon these dainties; eat as much as we can (we have great appetites now); and are as long as possible about it. If the fire will burn (it *will* sometimes) we are pretty cheerful. If it won't, we all remark to each other that it 's very cold, rub our hands, cover ourselves with coats and cloaks, and lie down again to doze, talk, and read (provided as aforesaid), until dinner-time. At five, another bell rings, and the stewardess reappears with another dish of potatoes — boiled this time — and store of hot meat of various kinds, not forgetting the roast pig, to be taken medicinally. We sit down at table again (rather more cheerfully than before); prolong the meal with a rather mouldy dessert of apples, grapes, and oranges; and drink our wine and brandy and water. The bottles and glasses are still upon the

table, and the oranges and so forth are rolling about according to their fancy and the ship's way, when the doctor comes down, by special nightly invitation, to join our evening rubber; immediately on whose arrival we make a party at whist, and as it is a rough night and the cards will not lie on the cloth, we put the tricks in our pockets as we take them. At whist we remain with exemplary gravity (deducting a short time for tea and toast) until eleven o'clock, or thereabouts; when the captain comes down again, in a sou'-wester hat tied under his chin, and a pilot-coat, making the ground wet where he stands. By this time the card-playing is over, and the bottles and glasses are again upon the table; and after an hour's pleasant conversation about the ship, the passengers, and things in general, the captain (who never goes to bed, and is never out of humour) turns up his coat collar for the deck again; shakes hands all round; and goes laughing out into the weather as merrily as to a birthday party.

As to daily news, there is no dearth of that commodity. This passenger is reported to have lost fourteen pounds at vingt-et-un in the saloon yesterday; and that passenger drinks his bottle of champagne every day, and how he does it (being only a clerk), nobody knows. The head engineer has distinctly said that there never was such times — meaning weather — and four good hands are ill, and have given in, dead beat. Several berths are full of water, and all the cabins are leaky. The ship's cook, secretly swigging damaged whiskey, has been found drunk; and has been played upon by the fire-engine until quite sober. All the stewards have fallen down stairs at various dinner-times, and go about with plasters in various places. The baker is ill, and so is the pastry-cook. A new man, horribly indisposed, has been required to fill the place of the latter officer; and has been propped and jammed up with empty casks in a little house upon deck, and commanded to roll out pie-crusts, which he protests (being highly bilious) it is death to him to look at. News! A dozen murders on shore would lack the interest of these slight incidents at sea.

Divided between our rubber and such topics as these, we were running (as we thought) into Halifax Harbour, on the fifteenth night, with little wind and a bright moon — indeed, we had made the Light at its outer entrance, and put the pilot in charge — when suddenly the ship struck upon a bank of

mud. An immediate rush on deck took place of [illegible] sides were crowded in an instant, and for a few [illegible] were in as lively a state of confusion as the greatest disorder would desire to see. The passengers, [illegible] water-casks, and other heavy matters, being [illegible] together aft, however, to lighten her in the head, [illegible] got off; and after some driving on towards an [illegible] line of objects (whose vicinity had been ann[illegible] in the disaster by a loud cry of "Breakers ah[illegible]", [illegible] backing of paddles, and heaving of the lead into a [illegible] decreasing depth of water, we dropped anchor in a [illegible] outlandish-looking nook which nobody on board [illegible] although there was land all about us, and so [illegible] could plainly see the waving branches of the trees.

It was strange enough, in the silence of m[illegible] dead stillness that seemed to be created by the [illegible] unexpected stoppage of the engine which had been [illegible] and blasting in our ears incessantly for so many days, [illegible] the look of blank astonishment expressed in every face [illegible] ning with the officers, tracing it through all the pass[illegible] and descending to the very stokers and furnace[illegible] emerged from below, one by one, and clustered t[illegible] smoky group about the hatchway of the engine-[illegible] ing notes in whispers. After throwing up a few [illegible] firing signal-guns in the hope of being hailed from the [illegible] at least of seeing a light — but without any [illegible] sound presenting itself — it was determined to [illegible] shore. It was amusing to observe how very k[illegible] passengers were, in volunteering to go ashore in the boat, for the general good, of course, not by any [illegible] because they thought the ship in an unsafe position [illegible] templated the possibility of her heeling over in case [illegible] were running out. Nor was it less amusing to [illegible] desperately unpopular the poor pilot became in [illegible] minute. He had had his passage out from [illegible] during the whole voyage had been quite a note[illegible] as a teller of anecdotes and cracker of jokes. Yet here [illegible] the very men who had laughed the loudest at his jo[illegible] flourishing their fists in his face, loading him with [illegible] tions, and defying him to his teeth as a villain!

The boat soon shoved off, with a lantern and sundry

lots on board; and in less than an hour returned, the officer in command bringing with him a tolerably tall young tree, which he had plucked up by the roots, to satisfy certain distrustful passengers whose minds misgave them that they were to be imposed upon and shipwrecked, and who would on no other terms believe that he had been ashore, or had done anything but fraudulently row a little way into the mist, specially to deceive them and compass their deaths. Our captain had foreseen from the first that we must be in a place called the Eastern passage; and so we were. It was about the last place in the world in which we had any business or reason to be, but a sudden fog, and some error on the pilot's part, were the cause. We were surrounded by banks, and rocks, and shoals of all kinds, but had happily drifted, it seemed, upon the only safe speck that was to be found thereabouts. Eased by this report, and by the assurance that the tide was past the ebb, we turned in at three o'clock in the morning.

I was dressing about half-past nine next day when the noise above hurried me on deck. When I had left it over-night, it was dark, foggy, and damp, and there were bleak hills all round us. Now, we were gliding down a smooth, broad stream, at the rate of eleven miles an hour; our colours flying gaily; our crew rigged out in their smartest clothes; our officers in uniform again; the sun shining as on a brilliant April day in England; the land stretched out on either side, streaked with light patches of snow; white wooden houses; people at their doors; telegraphs working; flags hoisted; wharves appearing; ships; quays crowded with people; distant noises; shouts; men and boys running down steep places towards the pier, — all more bright and gay and fresh to our unused eyes than words can paint them. We came to a wharf, paved with uplifted faces; got alongside, and were made fast, after some shouting and straining of cables; darted, a score of us, along the gangway, almost as soon as it was thrust out to meet us, and before it had reached the ship — and leaped upon the firm glad earth again!

I suppose this Halifax would have appeared an Elysium, though it had been a curiosity of ugly dulness. But I carried away with me a most pleasant impression of the town and its inhabitants, and have preserved it to this hour. Nor was it without regret that I came home without having found an

opportunity of returning thither, and once more shaking hands with the friends I made that day.

It happened to be the opening of the Legislature and General Assembly, at which ceremonial the Governor on the commencement of a new session of Parliament in England were so closely copied, and so gravely gone through on a small scale, that it was like looking at Westminster through the wrong end of a telescope. The governor, as the Queen's representative, delivered what may be called the Speech from the Throne. He said what he had to say manfully and well. The military band outside the building struck up "God save the Queen" with great vigour before his Excellency had well finished; the people shouted; the ins rubbed their hands, the outs shook their heads; the Government party said that it was such a good speech; the Opposition declared that it was such a bad one; the Speaker and members of the House of Assembly withdrew from the bar to say a great deal by themselves and do a little; and in short, everything went on and promised to go on, just as it does at home upon similar occasions.

The town is built on the side of a hill, the base of which being commanded by a strong fortress, not yet quite finished. Several streets of good breadth and appearance extend from the summit to the water-side, and are intersected by others running parallel with the river. The houses are chiefly of wood. The market is abundantly supplied, and provisions are exceedingly cheap. The weather being unusually mild for that time for the season of the year, there was no sleighing, but there were plenty of these vehicles in yards and sheds, and some of them, from the gorgeous quality of the decorations, might have "gone on" without alteration as state cars in a melodrama at Astley's. The day was one of fine; the air bracing and healthful; the whole aspect of the town cheerful, thriving, and industrious.

We lay there seven hours, to deliver and exchange mails. At length, having collected all our lingering passengers (including two or three choice spirits, who had indulged too freely in oysters and champagne, were found lying insensible on their backs in unfrequented streets), the engines were again put in motion, and we stood out for Boston.

Encountering squally weather again in the Bay of Fundy, we tumbled and rolled about as usual all that night and all next day. On the next afternoon, that is to say, on Saturday, the twenty-second of January, an American pilot-boat came alongside, and soon afterwards the Britannia steam-packet from Liverpool, eighteen days out, was telegraphed at Boston.

The indescribable interest with which I strained my eyes, as the first patches of American soil peeped like molehills from the green sea, and followed them, as they swelled, by slow and almost imperceptible degrees, into a continuous line of coast, can hardly be exaggerated. A sharp keen wind blew dead against us; a hard frost prevailed on shore; and the cold was most severe. Yet the air was so intensely clear, and dry, and bright, that the temperature was not only endurable, but delicious.

How I remained on deck, staring about me, until we came alongside the dock, and how, though I had had as many eyes as Argus, I should have had them all wide open, and all employed on new objects — are topics which I will not prolong this chapter to discuss. Neither will I more than hint at my foreigner-like mistake, in supposing that a party of most active persons, who scrambled on board at the peril of their lives as we approached the wharf, were newsmen, answering to that industrious class at home; whereas, despite the leathern wallets of news slung about the necks of some, and the broad sheets in the hands of all, they were Editors, who boarded ships in person (as one gentleman in a worsted comforter informed me), "because they liked the excitement of it." Suffice it in this place to say that one of these invaders, with a ready courtesy for which I thank him here most gratefully, went on before to order rooms at the hotel; and that when I followed, as I soon did, I found myself rolling through the long passages with an involuntary imitation of the gait of Mr. T. P. Cooke, in a new nautical melodrama.

"Dinner, if you please," said I to the waiter.

"When?" said the waiter.

"As quick as possible," said I.

"Right away?" said the waiter.

After a moment's hesitation, I answered, "No," at hazard.

"*Not* right away?" cried the waiter, with an amount of surprise that made me start.

I looked at him doubtfully, and returned, "No; I would rather have it in this private room. I like it very much."

At this I really thought the waiter must have gone out of his mind; as I believe he would have done, but for the interposition of another man, who whispered in his ear, "Directly."

"Well! and that 's a fact!" said the waiter, looking helplessly at me; "right away."

I saw now that "Right away" and "Directly" were one and the same thing. So I reversed my previous answer, and sat down to dinner in ten minutes afterwards; and a capital dinner it was.

The hotel (a very excellent one) is called the Tremont House. It has more galleries, colonnades, piazzas, and passages than I can remember, or the reader would believe.

CHAPTER III

BOSTON.

In all the public establishments of America, the utmost courtesy prevails. Most of our Departments are susceptible of considerable improvement in this respect, but the Custom House above all others would do well to take example from the United States, and render itself somewhat less odious and offensive to foreigners. The servile rapacity of the French officials is sufficiently contemptible; but there is a surly, boorish incivility about our men, alike disgusting to all persons who fall into their hands, and discreditable to the nation that keeps such ill-conditioned curs snarling about its gates.

When I landed in America, I could not help being strongly impressed with the contrast their Custom House presented, and the attention, politeness, and good-humour with which its officers discharged their duty.

As we did not land at Boston, in consequence of some detention at the wharf, until after dark, I received my first impressions of the city in walking down to the Custom House on the morning after our arrival, which was Sunday. I am afraid to say, by the way, how many offers of pews and seats in church for that morning were made to us, by formal note of invitation, before we had half finished our first dinner in America, but if I may be allowed to make a moderate guess, without going into nicer calculation, I should say that at least as many sittings were proffered us as would have accommodated a score or two of grown-up families. The number of creeds and forms of religion to which the pleasure of our company was requested was in very fair proportion.

Not being able, in the absence of any change of clothes, to go to church that day, we were compelled to decline these kindnesses, one and all; and I was reluctantly obliged to forego the delight of hearing Dr. Channing, who happened to preach that morning for the first time in a very long interval. I

mention the name of this distinguished and a [illegible] (with whom I soon afterwards had the [illegible] personally acquainted), that I may have [illegible] recording my humble tribute of admiration [illegible] high abilities and character; and for the [illegible] with which he has ever opposed himself to that [illegible] blot and foul disgrace — Slavery.

To return to Boston. When I got into the streets [illegible] Sunday morning, the air was so clear, the [illegible] bright and gay; the signboards were painted [illegible] colours; the gilded letters were so very [illegible] were so very red, the stone was so very white, [illegible] area railings were so very green, the knobs and [illegible] street doors so marvellously bright and twinkling [illegible] slight and unsubstantial in appearance — that every [illegible] fare in the city looked exactly like a scene in a [illegible] It rarely happens in the business streets that a [illegible] if I may venture to call anybody a tradesman, where [illegible] is a merchant — resides above his store, so that [illegible] tions are often carried on in one house, and the [illegible] covered with boards and inscriptions. As I [illegible] kept glancing up at these boards, confidently [illegible] a few of them change into something, and I [illegible] corner suddenly without looking out for the [illegible] loon, who, I had no doubt, were hiding in a [illegible] some pillar close at hand. As to Harlequin [illegible] discovered immediately that they lodged (they are [illegible] ing after lodgings in a pantomime) at a very [illegible] maker's, one story high, near the hotel, which, in [illegible] various symbols and devices, almost covering the [illegible] had a great dial hanging out — to be jumped [illegible] course.

The suburbs are, if possible, even more unsubstantial [illegible] ing than the city. The white wooden houses [illegible] makes one wink to look at them, with their green [illegible] [illegible], are so sprinkled and dropped about in [illegible] without seeming to have any root at all in the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] are so prim, and [illegible] varnished, that I almost believed the whole affair [illegible] taken up piecemeal like a child's toy, and [illegible] box.

The city is a beautiful one, and cannot fail, I should imagine, to impress all strangers very favourably. The private dwelling-houses are, for the most part, large and elegant; the shops extremely good; and the public buildings handsome. The State House is built upon the summit of a hill, which rises gradually at first, and afterwards by a steep ascent, almost from the water's edge. In front is a green inclosure, called the Common. The site is beautiful; and from the top there is a charming panoramic view of the whole town and neighbourhood. In addition to a variety of commodious offices, it contains two handsome chambers: in one the House of Representatives of the State hold their meetings; in the other, the Senate. Such proceedings as I saw here were conducted with perfect gravity and decorum; and were certainly calculated to inspire attention and respect.

There is no doubt that much of the intellectual refinement and superiority of Boston is referable to the quiet influence of the University of Cambridge, which is within three or four miles of the city. The resident professors at that university are gentlemen of learning and varied attainments; and are, without one exception that I can call to mind, men who would shed a grace upon, and do honour to, any society in the civilised world. Many of the resident gentry in Boston and its neighbourhood, and I think I am not mistaken in adding, a large majority of those who are attached to the liberal professions there, have been educated at this same school. Whatever the defects of American universities may be, they disseminate no prejudices; rear no bigots; dig up the buried ashes of no old superstitions; never interpose between the people and their improvement; exclude no man because of his religious opinions; above all, in their whole course of study and instruction, recognise a world, and a broad one, too, lying beyond the college walls.

It was a source of inexpressible pleasure to me to observe the almost imperceptible, but not less certain effect wrought by this institution among the small community of Boston; and to note at every turn the humanising tastes and desires it has engendered; the affectionate friendships to which it has given rise; the amount of vanity and prejudice it has dispelled. The golden calf they worship at Boston is a pigmy compared with the giant effigies set up in other parts of that vast count-

ing-house which lies beyond the Atlantic; and the [illegible] dollar sinks into something comparatively insignificant [illegible] whole Pantheon of better gods.

Above all, I sincerely believe that the public [illegible] and charities of this capital of Massachusetts are as [illegible] fect as the most considerate wisdom, benevolence, [illegible] ity can make them. I never in my life was more [illegible] the contemplation of happiness, under circumstances [illegible] tion and bereavement, than in my visits to these [illegible] ments.

It is a great and pleasant feature of all such [illegible] America that they are either supported by the State [illegible] by the State; or (in the event of their not needing [illegible] hand) that they act in concert with it, and are [illegible] the people's. I cannot but think, with a view to the [illegible] and its tendency to elevate or depress the character [illegible] industrious classes, that a Public Charity is [illegible] better than a Private Foundation, no matter how [illegible] the latter may be endowed. In our own country, where [illegible] not, until within these later days, been a very popular fa[illegible] with governments to display any extraordinary regard [illegible] great mass of the people, or to recognise their existence [illegible] improvable creatures, private charities, unexampled [illegible] history of the earth, have arisen, to do an incalculable [illegible] of good among the destitute and afflicted. But the [illegible] ment of the country, having neither act nor part in [illegible] not in the receipt of any portion of the gratitude they [illegible] and offering very little shelter or relief beyond that [illegible] to be found in the workhouse and the jail, has [illegible] unnaturally, to be looked upon by the poor rather as a [illegible] master, quick to correct and punish, than a kind [illegible] merciful and vigilant in their hour of need.

The maxim that out of evil cometh good is strongly [illegible] trated by these establishments at home, as the [illegible] Prerogative Office in Doctors' Commons can abundantly [illegible] Some immensely rich old gentleman or lady, surrounded [illegible] needy relatives, makes, upon a low average, a will a week. The old gentleman or lady, never very remarkable in the [illegible] of times for good temper, is full of aches and pains from [illegible] to foot, full of fancies and caprices, full of spleen, [illegible] suspicion, and dislike. To cancel old wills, and invent [illegible]

ones, is at last the sole business of such a testator's existence; and relations and friends (some of whom have been bred up distinctly to inherit a large share of the property, and have been, from their cradles, specially disqualified from devoting themselves to any useful pursuit, on that account) are so often and so unexpectedly and summarily cut off, and reinstated, and cut off again, that the whole family, down to the remotest cousin, is kept in a perpetual fever. At length it becomes plain that the old lady or gentleman has not long to live; and the plainer this becomes, the more clearly the old lady or gentleman perceives that everybody is in a conspiracy against their poor old dying relative; wherefore the old lady or gentleman makes another last will — positively the last this time — conceals the same in a china tea-pot, and expires next day. Then it turns out that the whole of the real and personal estate is divided between half a dozen charities; and that the dead and gone testator has in pure spite helped to do a great deal of good, at the cost of an immense amount of evil passion and misery.

The Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, at Boston, is superintended by a body of trustees who make an annual report to the corporation. The indigent blind of that State are admitted gratuitously. Those from the adjoining State of Connecticut, or from the States of Maine, Vermont, or New Hampshire, are admitted by a warrant from the State to which they respectively belong; or, failing that, must find security among their friends for the payment of about twenty pounds English for their first year's board and instruction, and ten for the second. "After the first year," say the trustees, "an account current will be opened with each pupil; he will be charged with the actual cost of his board, which will not exceed two dollars per week;" a trifle more than eight shillings English; "and he will be credited with the amount paid for him by the State, or by his friends; also with his earnings over and above the cost of the stock which he uses; so that all his earnings over one dollar per week will be his own. By the third year it will be known whether his earnings will more than pay the actual cost of his board; if they should, he will have it at his option to remain and receive his earnings, or not. Those who prove unable to earn their own livelihood will not be retained; as it is not desirable to convert the estab-

lishment into an almshouse, or to retain any but w[illegible] in the hive. Those who by physical or mental [illegible] disqualified for work are thereby disqualified fr[illegible] bers of an industrious community; and they can [illegible] vided for in establishments fitted for the infirm."

I went to see this place one very fine winter [illegible] Italian sky above, and the air so clear and bright [illegible] that even my eyes, which are none of the best, [illegible] the minute lines and scraps of tracery in distant [illegible] Like most other public institutions in America, of [illegible] class, it stands a mile or two without the town, in a [illegible] healthy spot, and is an airy, spacious, hand[illegible] is built upon a height, commanding the harbour. W[illegible] paused for a moment at the door, and marked h[illegible] free the whole scene was — what sparkling [illegible] upon the waves, and welled up every moment to the [illegible] as though the world below, like that above, were [illegible] the bright day, and gushing over in its fulness of [illegible] I gazed from sail to sail away upon a ship at sea, a [illegible] of shining white, the only cloud upon the still, [illegible] blue — and, turning, saw a blind boy with his [illegible] addressed that way, as though he too had some [illegible] him of the glorious distance, I felt a kind of [illegible] place should be so very light, and a strange wish that [illegible] sake it were darker. It was but momentary, of [illegible] a mere fancy, but I felt it keenly for all that.

The children were at their daily tasks in different [illegible] except a few who were already dismissed, and were at [illegible] Here, as in many institutions, no uniform is worn, [illegible] very glad of it, for two reasons. Firstly, because I am [illegible] that nothing but senseless custom and want of th[illegible] [illegible] us to the liveries and badges we are so [illegible] home. Secondly, because the absence of these [illegible] each child to the visitor in his or her own pr[illegible] with its individuality unimpaired, not lost in a [illegible] [illegible] repetition of the same unmeaning garb, w[illegible] really an important consideration. The wisdom of [illegible] a little harmless pride in personal appearance even [illegible] blind, or the whimsical absurdity of considering charity [illegible] leather breeches inseparable companions, as we do, [illegible] comment.

Good order, cleanliness, and comfort pervaded every corner of the building. The various classes, who were gathered round their teachers, answered the questions put to them with readiness and intelligence, and in a spirit of cheerful contest for precedence which pleased me very much. Those who were at play were gleesome and noisy as other children. More spiritual and affectionate friendships appeared to exist among them than would be found among other young persons suffering under no deprivation; but this I expected and was prepared to find. It is a part of the great scheme of Heaven's merciful consideration for the afflicted.

In a portion of the building, set apart for that purpose, are workshops for blind persons whose education is finished, and who have acquired a trade, but who cannot pursue it in an ordinary manufactory because of their deprivation. Several people were at work here, making brushes, mattresses, and so forth; and the cheerfulness, industry, and good order discernible in every other part of the building extended to this department also.

On the ringing of a bell, the pupils all repaired, without any guide or leader, to a spacious music-hall, where they took their seats in an orchestra erected for that purpose, and listened with manifest delight to a voluntary on the organ, played by one of themselves. At its conclusion, the performer, a boy of nineteen or twenty, gave place to a girl; and to her accompaniment they all sang a hymn, and afterwards a sort of chorus. It was very sad to look upon and hear them, happy though their condition unquestionably was; and I saw that one blind girl, who (being for the time deprived of the use of her limbs, by illness) sat close beside me with her face towards them, wept silently the while she listened.

It is strange to watch the faces of the blind, and see how free they are from all concealment of what is passing in their thoughts; observing which, a man with eyes may blush to contemplate the mask he wears. Allowing for one shade of anxious expression which is never absent from their countenances, and the like of which we may readily detect in our own faces if we try to feel our way in the dark, every idea, as it rises within them, is expressed with the lightning's speed, and nature's truth. If the company at a rout, or drawing-room at court, could only for one time be as unconscious of the eyes

upon them as blind men and women are, what secrets w[illegible] come out, and what a worker of hypocrisy this [illegible] of which we so much pity, would appear to be!

The thought occurred to me as I sat down in an [illegible] before a girl, blind, deaf, and dumb, destitute of [illegible] nearly so, of taste: before a fair young creature [illegible] human faculty, and hope, and power of goodness [illegible] inclosed within her delicate frame, and but one [illegible] — the sense of touch. There she was, before me [illegible] it were, in a marble cell, impervious to any ray [illegible] particle of sound; with her poor white hand [illegible] chink in the wall, beckoning to some good man [illegible] an Immortal soul might be awakened.

Long before I looked upon her, the help had [illegible] face was radiant with intelligence and pleasure. H[illegible] braided by her own hands, was bound about a [illegible] intellectual capacity and development were beautifully [illegible] in its graceful outline, and its broad open brow, [illegible] arranged by herself, was a pattern of neatness [illegible] the work she had knitted lay beside her, her wr[illegible] on the desk she leaned upon. From the mournful [illegible] bereavement, there had slowly risen up this gentle, [illegible] guileless, grateful-hearted being.

Like other inmates of that house, she had a green [illegible] bound round her eyelids. A doll she had dressed [illegible] upon the ground. I took it up, and saw that she had [illegible] green fillet such as she wore herself, and fastened it [illegible] mimic eyes.

She was seated in a little inclosure, made by [illegible] and forms, writing her daily journal. But [illegible] pursuit, she engaged in an animated communication [illegible] teacher who sat beside her. This was a favourite [illegible] the poor pupil. If she could see the face of her fair [illegible] tress, she would not love her less, I am sure.

I have extracted a few disjointed fragments of her [illegible] from an account, written by that one man who has [illegible] what she is. It is a very beautiful and touching narrative [illegible] I wish I could present it entire.

Her name is Laura Bridgman. "She was born in Ha[illegible] New Hampshire, on the twenty-first of December, 18[illegible] is described as having been a very sprightly and pretty [illegible]

with bright blue eyes. She was, however, so puny and feeble until she was a year and a half old that her parents hardly hoped to rear her. She was subject to severe fits, which seemed to rack her frame almost beyond her power of endurance, and life was held by the feeblest tenure; but when a year and a half old, she seemed to rally, the dangerous symptoms subsided, and at twenty months old, she was perfectly well.

"Then her mental powers, hitherto stinted in their growth, rapidly developed themselves; and during the four months of health which she enjoyed, she appears (making due allowance for a fond mother's account) to have displayed a considerable degree of intelligence.

"But suddenly she sickened again; her disease raged with great violence during five weeks, when her eyes and ears were inflamed, suppurated, and their contents were discharged. But though sight and hearing were gone for ever, the poor child's sufferings were not ended. The fever raged during seven weeks; for five months she was kept in bed in a darkened room; it was a year before she could walk unsupported, and two years before she could sit up all day. It was now observed that her sense of smell was almost entirely destroyed; and, consequently, that her taste was much blunted.

"It was not until four years of age that the poor child's bodily health seemed restored, and she was able to enter upon her apprenticeship of life and the world.

"But what a situation was hers! The darkness and the silence of the tomb were around her; no mother's smile called forth her answering smile, no father's voice taught her to imitate his sounds: — they, brothers and sisters, were but forms of matter which resisted her touch, but which differed not from the furniture of the house, save in warmth, and in the power of locomotion; and not even in these respects from the dog and the cat.

"But the immortal spirit which had been implanted within her could not die, nor be maimed nor mutilated; and though most of its avenues of communication with the world were cut off, it began to manifest itself through the others. As soon as she could walk, she began to explore the room, and then the house; she became familiar with the form, density, weight, and heat of every article she could lay her hands upon. She followed her mother, and felt her hands and arms, as she was

occupied about the house; and her disposition to imitate led her to repeat everything herself. She even learned to sew a little, and to knit."

The reader will scarcely need to be told, however, that the opportunities of communicating with her were very, very limited; and that the moral effects of her wretched state soon began to appear. Those who cannot be enlightened by reason can only be controlled by force; and this, coupled with her great privations, must soon have reduced her to a worse condition than that of the beasts that perish, but for timely and unhoped-for aid.

"At this time I was so fortunate as to hear of the child, and immediately hastened to Hanover to see her. I found her with a well-formed figure; a strongly marked, nervous-sanguine temperament; a large and beautifully shaped head; and the whole system in healthy action. The parents were easily induced to consent to her coming to Boston, and on the 4th of October, 1837, they brought her to the Institution.

"For a while she was much bewildered; and after waiting about two weeks, until she became acquainted with her new locality, and somewhat familiar with the inmates, the attempt was made to give her knowledge of arbitrary signs, by which she could interchange thoughts with others.

"There was one of two ways to be adopted: either to go on to build up a language of signs on the basis of the natural language which she had already commenced herself, or to teach her the purely arbitrary language in common use; that is, to give her a sign for every individual thing, or to give her a knowledge of letters, by combination of which she might express her idea of the existence, and the mode and condition of existence, of anything. The former would have been easy, but very ineffectual; the latter seemed very difficult, but, if accomplished, very effectual. I determined, therefore, to try the latter.

"The first experiments were made by taking articles in common use, such as knives, forks, spoons, keys, etc., and pasting upon them labels with their names printed in raised letters. These she felt very carefully, and soon, of course, distinguished that the crooked lines *s p o o n* differed as much from the crooked lines *k e y* as the spoon differed from the key in form.

"Then small detached labels, with the same words printed upon them, were put into her hands; and she soon observed that they were similar to the ones pasted on the articles. She showed her perception of this similarity by laying the label *k e y* upon the key, and the label *s p o o n* upon the spoon. She was encouraged here by the natural sign of approbation, patting on the head.

"The same process was then repeated with all the articles which she could handle; and she very easily learned to place the proper labels upon them. It was evident, however, that the only intellectual exercise was that of imitation and memory. She recollected that the label *b o o k* was placed upon a book, and she repeated the process first from imitation, next from memory, with only the motive of love of approbation, but apparently without the intellectual perception of any relation between the things.

"After a while, instead of labels, the individual letters were given to her on detached bits of paper: they were arranged side by side so as to spell *b o o k*, *k e y*, etc.; then they were mixed up in a heap, and a sign was made for her to arrange them herself, so as to express the words *b o o k*, *k e y*, etc.; and she did so.

"Hitherto the process had been mechanical, and the success about as great as teaching a very knowing dog a variety of tricks. The poor child had sat in mute amazement, and patiently imitated everything her teacher did; but now the truth began to flash upon her: her intellect began to work: she perceived that here was a way by which she could herself make up a sign of anything that was in her own mind, and show it to another mind; and at once her countenance lighted up with a human expression: it was no longer a dog, or parrot: it was an immortal spirit, eagerly seizing upon a new link of union with other spirits! I could almost fix upon the moment when this truth dawned upon her mind, and spread its light to her countenance; I saw that the great obstacle was overcome; and that henceforward nothing but patient and persevering, but plain and straightforward, efforts were to be used.

"The result, thus far, is quickly related, and easily conceived; but not so was the process, for many weeks of apparently unprofitable labour were passed before it was effected.

"When it was said above that a sign was made, it is intended to say that the action was performed by her teacher, she feeling his hands, and then imitating the motion.

"The next step was to procure a set of metal types, with the different letters of the alphabet cast upon their ends; also a board, in which were square holes, into which the types could be set; so that the letters on their ends alone be felt above the surface.

"Then, on any article being handed to her, — for example, a pencil, or a watch, — she would select the component parts and arrange them on her board, and read them with great pleasure.

"She was exercised for several weeks in this way, and her vocabulary became extensive; and then the important step was taken of teaching her how to represent the different letters by the position of her fingers, instead of the cumbrous apparatus of the board and types. She accomplished this apparently easily, for her intellect had begun to work in unison with her teacher, and her progress was rapid.

"This was the period, about three months after she had commenced, that the first report of her case was made, in which it is stated that 'she has just learned the manual alphabet, as used by the deaf mutes, and it is a subject of delight and wonder to see how rapidly, correctly, and eagerly she goes on with her labours. Her teacher gives her a new object, for instance, a pencil, — first lets her examine it, and get the idea of its use, then teaches her how to spell it by making the signs for the letters with her own fingers: the child grasps the hand, and feels her fingers, as the different letters are formed; she turns her head a little on one side, like a person listening closely; her lips are apart; she seems scarcely to breathe; her countenance, at first anxious, gradually changes to a smile as she comprehends the lesson. She then holds up her fingers, and spells the word in the manual alphabet; next she takes her types and arranges her letters; and last, to make sure that she is right, she takes the whole of the types which form the word, and places them upon or in contact with the pencil, or whatever the object may be.'

"The whole of the succeeding year was passed in gratifying her eager inquiries for the names of every object which she could possibly handle; in exercising her in the use of

... [illegible] in extending in every possible way her ... of the physical relations of things; and in proper ... of her mind.

"At the end of the year a report of her case was made, from ... the first which is an extract: —

"'It has been ascertained beyond the possibility of doubt ... she cannot see a ray of light, cannot hear the least sound, ... never exercises her sense of smell, if she have any. Thus ... mind dwells in darkness and stillness as profound as that ... a closed tomb at midnight. Of beautiful sights, and sweet ... ds, and pleasant odours, she has no conception: nevertheless, she seems as happy and playful as a bird or a lamb; and ... employment of her intellectual faculties, or the acquirement ... a new idea, gives her a vivid pleasure, which is plainly ...rked in her expressive features. She never seems to repine, ... has all the buoyancy and gaiety of childhood. She is fond ... fun and frolic, and, when playing with the rest of the children, her shrill laugh sounds loudest of the group.

"'When left alone, she seems very happy if she have her ...tting or sewing, and will busy herself for hours: if she ...ve no occupation, she evidently amuses herself by imaginary ...logues, or by recalling past impressions; she counts with ...r fingers, or spells out names of things which she has ...ently learned, in the manual alphabet of the deaf mutes. ... this lonely self-communion she seems to reason, reflect, and ...ge: if she spell a word wrong with the fingers of her right ...nd, she instantly strikes it with her left, as her teacher does, ... sign of disapprobation; if right, then she pats herself upon ... head and looks pleased. She sometimes purposely spells ... word wrong with the left hand, looks roguish for a moment ... laughs, and then with the right hand strikes the left, as if ... correct it.

"'During the year she has attained great dexterity in the ... of the manual alphabet of the deaf mutes; and she spells ... the words and sentences which she knows so fast and so ...ly that only those accustomed to this language can follow ... the eye the rapid motions of her fingers.

"'But wonderful as is the rapidity with which she writes ... thoughts upon the air, still more so is the ease and accuracy ... which she reads the words thus written by another; ...ing their hands in hers, and following every movement of ... fingers.

their fingers, as letter after letter conveys their meaning to her mind. It is in this way that she converses with her blind playmates, and nothing can more forcibly show the power of mind in forcing matter to its purpose than a meeting between them. For if great talent and skill are necessary for two pantomimes to paint their thoughts and feelings by the movements of the body, and the expression of the countenance, how much greater the difficulty when darkness shrouds them both, and the one can hear no sound!

"'When Laura is walking through a passage-way, with her hands spread before her, she knows instantly every one she meets, and passes them with a sign of recognition; but if it be a girl of her own age, and especially if it be one of her favourites, there is instantly a bright smile of recognition, and a twining of arms, a grasping of hands, and a swift telegraphing upon the tiny fingers, whose rapid evolutions convey the thoughts and feelings from the outposts of one mind to those of the other. There are questions and answers, exchanges of joy or sorrow, there are kissings and partings, just as between little children with all their senses.'

"During this year, and six months after she had left home, her mother came to visit her, and the scene of their meeting was an interesting one.

"The mother stood some time, gazing with overflowing eyes upon her unfortunate child, who, all unconscious of her presence, was playing about the room. Presently Laura ran against her, and at once began feeling her hands, examining her dress, and trying to find out if she knew her; but not succeeding in this, she turned away as from a stranger, and the poor woman could not conceal the pang she felt at finding that her beloved child did not know her.

"She then gave Laura a string of beads which she used to wear at home, which were recognised by the child at once, who, with much joy, put them around her neck, and sought me eagerly to say she understood the string was from her home.

"The mother now tried to caress her, but poor Laura repelled her, preferring to be with her acquaintances.

"Another article from home was now given her, and she began to look much interested; she examined the stranger much closer, and gave me to understand that she knew she

came from Hanover; she even endured her caresses, but would leave her with indifference at the slightest signal. The distress of the mother was now painful to behold; for, although she had feared that she should not be recognised, the painful reality of being treated with cold indifference by a darling child was too much for woman's nature to bear.

"After a while, on the mother taking hold of her again, a vague idea seemed to flit across Laura's mind that this could not be a stranger; she therefore felt her hands very eagerly, while her countenance assumed an expression of intense interest; she became very pale, and then suddenly red; hope seemed struggling with doubt and anxiety, and never were contending emotions more strongly painted upon the human face: at this moment of painful uncertainty the mother drew her close to her side, and kissed her fondly, when at once the truth flashed upon the child, and all mistrust and anxiety disappeared from her face, as with an expression of exceeding joy she eagerly nestled to the bosom of her parent, and yielded herself to her fond embraces.

"After this, the beads were all unheeded; the playthings which were offered to her were utterly disregarded; her playmates, for whom but a moment before she gladly left the stranger, now vainly strove to pull her from her mother; and though she yielded her usual instantaneous obedience to my signal to follow me, it was evidently with painful reluctance. She clung close to me, as if bewildered and fearful; and when, after a moment, I took her to her mother, she sprang to her arms, and clung to her with eager joy.

"The subsequent parting between them showed alike the affection, the intelligence, and the resolution of the child.

"Laura accompanied her mother to the door, clinging close to her all the way, until they arrived at the threshold, where she paused, and felt around to ascertain who was near her. Perceiving the matron, of whom she is very fond, she grasped her with one hand, holding on convulsively to her mother with the other; and thus she stood for a moment; then she dropped her mother's hand, put her handkerchief to her eyes, and, turning round, clung sobbing to the matron; while her mother departed, with emotions as deep as those of her child.

. . . . . .

"It has been remarked in former reports that she can dis-

tinguish different degrees of intellect in others, and [illegible] soon regarded, almost with contempt, a newcomer, w[illegible] a few days, she discovered her weakness of r[illegible] unamiable part of her character has been more str[illegible] oped during the past year.

"She chooses for her friends and companions those who are intelligent, and can talk best with her, and evidently dislikes to be with those who are deficient in unless, indeed, she can make them serve her purposes, w she is evidently inclined to do. She takes advan[illegible] and makes them wait upon her, in a manner that [illegible] she could not exact of others; and in various ways [illegible] her Saxon blood.

"She is fond of having other children noticed by the teachers, and those whom she respects, but [illegible] not be carried too far, or she becomes jealous. She will have her share, which, if not the lion's, is the greater; and if she does not get it, she says, '*My mother* [illegible] *me.*'

"Her tendency to imitation is so strong that it leads to actions which must be entirely incomprehensible to [illegible] which can give her no other pleasure than the gratification of an internal faculty. She has been known to sit for [illegible] hour, holding a book before her sightless eyes, and moving lips, as she has observed seeing people do when reading.

"She one day pretended that her doll was sick, and went through all the motions of tending it, and giving it [illegible] she then put it carefully to bed, and placed a bottle of water to its feet, laughing all the time most heartily. When I came home, she insisted upon my going to see it, and its pulse; and when I told her to put a blister on its [illegible] she seemed to enjoy it amazingly, and almost screamed with delight.

"Her social feelings and her affections are very strong; when she is sitting at work, or at her studies, by the side one of her little friends, she will break off from her task a few moments, to hug and kiss them with an earnestness and warmth that is touching to behold.

"When left alone, she occupies and apparently amuses herself, and seems quite contented, and so strong seems to be the natural tendency of thought to put on the garb of language

that she often soliloquises in the *finger language*, slow and tedious as it is. But it is only when alone that she is quiet; for if she becomes sensible of the presence of any one near her, she is restless until she can sit close beside them, hold their hand, and converse with them by signs.

"In her intellectual character it is pleasing to observe an insatiable thirst for knowledge, and a quick perception of the relations of things. In her moral character, it is beautiful to behold her continual gladness, her keen enjoyment of existence, her expansive love, her unhesitating confidence, her sympathy with suffering, her conscientiousness, truthfulness, and hopefulness."

Such are a few fragments from the simple but most interesting and instructive history of Laura Bridgman. The name of her great benefactor and friend, who writes it, is Doctor Howe. There are not many persons, I hope and believe, who, after reading these passages, can ever hear that name with indifference.

A further account has been published by Dr. Howe, since the report from which I have just quoted. It describes her rapid mental growth and improvement during twelve months more, and brings her little history down to the end of last year. It is very remarkable that as we dream in words, and carry on imaginary conversations, in which we speak both for ourselves and for the shadows who appear to us in those visions of the night, so she, having no words, uses her finger alphabet in her sleep. And it has been ascertained that when her slumber is broken, and is much disturbed by dreams, she expresses her thoughts in an irregular and confused manner on her fingers, just as we should murmur and mutter them indistinctly, in the like circumstances.

I turned over the leaves of her Diary, and found it written in a fair legible square hand, and expressed in terms which were quite intelligible without any explanation. On my saying that I should like to see her write again, the teacher, who sat beside her, bade her, in their language, sign her name upon a slip of paper, twice or thrice. In doing so, I observed that she kept her left hand always touching, and following up, her right, in which, of course, she held the pen. No line was indicated by any contrivance, but she wrote straight and freely.

She had, until now, been quite unconscious of the presence

of visitors; but having her hand placed in that of the man who accompanied me, she immediately expressed upon her teacher's palm. Indeed, her sense of touch is exquisite that, having been acquainted with a person can recognise him or her after almost any interval. The gentleman had been in her company, I believe, but very and certainly had not seen her for many months. M she rejected at once, as she does that of any other stranger to her. But she retained my wife's hand pleasure, kissed her, and examined her dress with a curiosity and interest.

She was merry and cheerful, and showed much playfulness in her intercourse with her teacher. Her recognising a favourite playfellow and companion — blind girl — who silently, and with an equal sense coming surprise, took a seat beside her, was beautiful ness. It elicited from her at first, as other slight did twice or thrice during my visit, an unearthly was rather painful to hear. But on her teacher's lips, she immediately desisted, and embraced her and affectionately.

I had previously been into another chamber, where a of blind boys were swinging, and climbing, and various sports. They all clamoured, as we entered assistant master, who accompanied us, "Look at me, Mr Please, Mr. Hart, look at me!" evincing, I thought this an anxiety peculiar to their condition that their of agility should be seen. Among them was a small low, who stood aloof, entertaining himself with a exercise for bringing the arms and chest into play, enjoyed mightily, especially when, in thrusting out arm, he brought it into contact with another boy. I Brighton, this young child was deaf, and dumb and

Dr Howe's account of this pupil's first instruction striking, and so intimately connected with Laura herself cannot refrain from a short extract. I may premise that poor boy's name is Oliver Caswell, that he is thirteen age, and that he was in full possession of all his fa three years and four months old. He was then atta scarlet fever: in four weeks became deaf, in a few weeks blind, in six months, dumb. He showed his ani

this last deprivation by often feeling the lips of other persons when they were talking, and then putting his hand upon his own, as if to assure himself that he had them in the right position.

"His thirst for knowledge," says Dr. Howe, "proclaimed itself as soon as he entered the house, by his eager examination of everything he could feel or smell in his new location. For instance, treading upon the register of a furnace, he instantly stooped down, and began to feel it, and soon discovered the way in which the upper plate moved upon the lower one; but this was not enough for him, so, lying down upon his face, he applied his tongue first to one then to the other, and seemed to discover that they were of different kinds of metal.

"His signs were expressive; and the strictly natural language, laughing, crying, sighing, kissing, embracing, etc., was perfect.

"Some of the analogical signs which (guided by his faculty of imitation) he had contrived were comprehensible; such as the waving motion of his hand for the motion of a boat, the circular one for a wheel, etc.

"The first object was to break up the use of these signs and to substitute for them the use of purely arbitrary ones.

"Profiting by the experience I had gained in the other cases, I omitted several steps of the process before employed, and commenced at once with the finger language. Taking therefore, several articles having short names, such as key, cup, mug, etc., and with Laura for an auxiliary, I sat down, and, taking his hand, placed it upon one of them, and then, with my own, made the letters *k e y*. He felt my hands eagerly with both of his, and, on my repeating the process, he evidently tried to imitate the motions of my fingers. In a few minutes he contrived to feel the motions of my fingers with one hand, and holding out the other he tried to imitate them, laughing most heartily when he succeeded. Laura was by, interested even to agitation; and the two presented a singular sight: her face was flushed and anxious, and her fingers twined in among ours so closely as to follow every motion, but so lightly as not to embarrass them; while Oliver stood attentive, his head a little aside, his face turned up, his left hand grasping mine, and his right held out. At every motion of my fingers his countenance betokened keen attention; there was an expression of anxiety

as he tried to imitate the motions; then a smile came out as he thought he could do so, and spread into a laugh the moment he succeeded, and felt me pat his head. Laura clap him heartily upon the back, and jump up and in her joy.

"He learned more than a half-dozen letters in half an and seemed delighted with his success, at least to approbation. His attention then began to flag, and I menced playing with him. It was evident that in a had merely been imitating the motions of my fingers, a cing his hand upon the key, cup, etc., as part of the without any perception of the relation between the the object.

"When he was tired with play I took him back to and he was quite ready to begin again his process of He soon learned to make the letters for *k e y*, *p e n*, having the object repeatedly placed in his hand, he perceived the relation I wished to establish between This was evident, because, when I made the letters *p e n*, or *c u p*, he would select the article.

"The perception of this relation was not a that radiant flash of intelligence, and that glow of marked the delightful moment when Laura first I then placed all the articles on the table, and, little distance with the children, placed Oliver's positions to spell *k e y*, on which Laura went and article: the little fellow seemed to be much and looked very attentive and smiling. I then make the letters *b r e a d*, and in an instant Laura brought him a piece: he smelled at it, put it to cocked up his head with a most knowing look, reflect a moment; and then laughed outright, as say, 'Ah! I understand now how something may out of this.'

"It was now clear that he had the capacity and to learn, that he was a proper subject for instruction needed only persevering attention. I therefore hands of an intelligent teacher, nothing doubting progress."

Well may this gentleman call that a delightful which some distant promise of her present state first

upon the darkened mind of Laura Bridgman. Throughout his life, the recollection of that moment will be to him a source of pure, unfading happiness; nor will it shine least brightly on the evening of his days of noble usefulness.

The affection that exists between these two — the master and the pupil — is as far removed from all ordinary care and regard as the circumstances in which it has had its growth are apart from the common occurrences of life. He is occupied now in devising means of imparting to her higher knowledge, and of conveying to her some adequate idea of the Great Creator of that universe in which, dark and silent and scentless though it be to her, she has such deep delight and glad enjoyment.

Ye who have eyes and see not, and have ears and hear not; ye who are as the hypocrites of sad countenances, and disfigure your faces that ye may seem unto men to fast; learn healthy cheerfulness and mild contentment from the deaf, and dumb, and blind! Self-elected saints with gloomy brows, this sightless, earless, voiceless child may teach you lessons you will do well to follow. Let that poor hand of hers lie gently on your hearts; for there may be something in its healing touch akin to that of the Great Master whose precepts you misconstrue, whose lessons you pervert, of whose charity and sympathy with all the world not one among you in his daily practice knows as much as many of the worst among those fallen sinners to whom you are liberal in nothing but the preachment of perdition!

As I rose to quit the room a pretty little child of one of the attendants came running in to greet its father. For the moment, a child with eyes, among the sightless crowd, impressed me almost as painfully as the blind boy in the porch had done, two hours ago. Ah! how much brighter and more deeply blue, glowing and rich though it had been before, was the scene without, contrasting with the darkness of so many youthful lives within!

At South Boston, as it is called, in a situation excellently adapted for the purpose, several charitable institutions are clustered together. One of these is the State Hospital for the insane; admirably conducted on those enlightened principles of conciliation and kindness, which twenty years ago would have

been worse than heretical, and which have been acted upon with so much success in our own pauper asylum at Hanwell. "Evince a desire to show some confidence, and repose some trust, even in mad people," — said the resident physician, as we walked along the galleries, his patients flocking round us unrestrained. Of those who deny or doubt the wisdom of this maxim after witnessing its effects, if there be such people still alive, I can only say that I hope I may never be summoned as a juryman on a commission of lunacy whereof they are the subjects; for I should certainly find them out of their senses, on such evidence alone.

Each ward in this institution is shaped like a long gallery or hall, with the dormitories of the patients opening from it on either hand. Here they work, read, play at skittles, and other games; and when the weather does not admit of their taking exercise out of doors, pass the day together. In one of these rooms, seated, calmly, and quite as a matter of course, among a throng of madwomen, black and white, were the physician's wife and another lady, with a couple of children. These ladies were graceful and handsome; and it was not difficult to perceive at a glance that even their presence there had a highly beneficial influence on the patients who were grouped about them.

Leaning her head against the chimney-piece, with a great assumption of dignity and refinement of manner, sat an elderly female, in as many scraps of finery as Madge Wildfire herself. Her head in particular was so strewn with scraps of gauze and cotton and bits of paper, and had so many queer odds and ends stuck all about it, that it looked like a bird's nest. She was radiant with imaginary jewels; wore a rich pair of undoubted gold spectacles; and gracefully dropped upon her lap, as we approached, a very old greasy newspaper, in which I dare say she had been reading an account of her own presentation at some foreign court.

I have been thus particular in describing her, because she will serve to exemplify the physician's manner of acquiring and retaining the confidence of his patients.

"This," he said aloud, taking me by the hand, and advancing to the fantastic figure with great politeness — not raising her suspicions by the slightest look or whisper, or any kind of aside, to me — "this lady is the hostess of this mansion, sir.

It belongs to her. Nobody else has anything whatever to do with it. It is a large establishment, as you see, and requires a great number of attendants. She lives, you observe, in the very first style. She is kind enough to receive my visits, and to permit my wife and family to reside here; for which it is hardly necessary to say we are much indebted to her. She is exceedingly courteous, you perceive," on this hint she bowed condescendingly, "and will permit me to have the pleasure of introducing you: a gentleman from England, ma'am: newly arrived from England, after a very tempestuous passage: Mr. Dickens — the lady of the house!"

We exchanged the most dignified salutations with profound gravity and respect, and so went on. The rest of the madwomen seemed to understand the joke perfectly (not only in this case, but in all the others, except their own), and to be highly amused by it. The nature of their several kinds of insanity was made known to me in the same way, and we left each of them in high good-humour. Not only is a thorough confidence established, by these means, between physician and patient, in respect of the nature and extent of their hallucinations, but it is easy to understand that opportunities are afforded for seizing any moment of reason to startle them by placing their own delusion before them in its most incongruous and ridiculous light.

Every patient in this asylum sits down to dinner every day with a knife and fork; and in the midst of them sits the gentleman, whose manner of dealing with his charges I have just described. At every meal moral influence alone restrains the more violent among them from cutting the throats of the rest; but the effect of that influence is reduced to an absolute certainty, and is found, even as a means of restraint, to say nothing of it as a means of cure, a hundred times more efficacious than all the strait-waistcoats, fetters, and hand-cuffs, that ignorance, prejudice, and cruelty have manufactured since the creation of the world.

In the labour department, every patient is as freely trusted with the tools of his trade as if he were a sane man. In the garden, and on the farm, they work with spades, rakes, and hoes. For amusement, they walk, run, fish, paint, read, and ride out to take the air in carriages provided for the purpose. They have among themselves a sewing society to make clothes

for the poor, which holds meetings, passes resolutions, never comes to fisty cuffs or bowie-knives as sane assemblies have been known to do elsewhere; and conducts all its proceedings with the greatest decorum. The irritability, which would otherwise be expended on their own flesh, clothes, and furniture, is dissipated in these pursuits. They are cheerful, tranquil, and healthy.

Once a week they have a ball, in which the doctor and his family, with all the nurses and attendants, take an active part. Dances and marches are performed alternately, to the enlivening strains of a piano; and now and then some gentleman or lady (whose proficiency has been previously ascertained) obliges the company with a song; nor does it ever degenerate, at a tender crisis, into a screech or howl; wherein, I must confess, I should have thought the danger lay. At an early hour they all meet together for these festive purposes; at eight o'clock refreshments are served; and at nine they separate.

Immense politeness and good-breeding are observed throughout. They all take their tone from the doctor; and he moves a very Chesterfield among the company. Like other assemblies, these entertainments afford a fruitful topic of conversation among the ladies for some days; and the gentlemen are so anxious to shine on these occasions that they have been sometimes found "practising their steps" in private, to cut a more distinguished figure in the dance.

It is obvious that one great feature of this system is the inculcation and encouragement, even among such unhappy persons, of a decent self-respect. Something of the same spirit pervades all the institutions at South Boston.

There is the House of Industry. In that branch of it which is devoted to the reception of old or otherwise helpless paupers, these words are painted on the walls: "WORTHY OF NOTICE. SELF-GOVERNMENT, QUIETUDE, AND PEACE ARE BLESSINGS." It is not assumed and taken for granted that being there they must be evil-disposed and wicked people, before whose vicious eyes it is necessary to flourish threats and harsh restraints. They are met at the very threshold with this mild appeal. All within-doors is very plain and simple, as it ought to be, but arranged with a view to peace and comfort. It costs no more than any other plan of arrangement, but it bespeaks an amount of consideration for those who are

induced to seek a shelter there, which puts them at once upon their gratitude and good behaviour. Instead of being parcelled out in great, long, rambling wards, where a certain amount of wretched life may mope, and pine, and shiver, all day long, the building is divided into separate rooms, each with its share of light and air. In these, the better kind of paupers live. They have a motive for exertion and becoming pride, in the desire to make these little chambers comfortable and decent. I do not remember one but it was clean and neat, and had its plant or two upon the window-sill, or row of crockery upon the shelf, or small display of coloured prints upon the white-washed wall, or, perhaps, its wooden clock behind the door.

The orphans and young children are in an adjoining building; separate from this, but a part of the same institution. Some are such little creatures that the stairs are of Lilliputian measurement, fitted to their tiny strides. The same consideration for their years and weakness is expressed in their very seats, which are perfect curiosities, and look like articles of furniture for a pauper doll's house. I can imagine the glee of our Poor-Law Commissioners at the notion of these seats having arms and backs; but small spines being of older date than their occupation of the board room at Somerset House, I thought even this provision very merciful and kind.

Here again, I was greatly pleased with the inscriptions on the wall, which were scraps of plain morality, easily remembered and understood: such as "Love one another" — "God remembers the smallest creature in his creation;" and straightforward advice of that nature. The books and tasks of these smallest of scholars, were adapted, in the same judicious manner, to their childish powers. When we had examined these lessons, four morsels of girls (of whom one was blind) sang a little song, about the merry month of May, which I thought (being extremely dismal) would have suited an English November better. That done, we went to see their sleeping-rooms on the floor above, in which the arrangements were no less excellent and gentle than those we had seen below. And after observing that the teachers were of a class and character well suited to the spirit of the place, I took leave of the infants with a lighter heart than ever I have taken leave of pauper infants yet.

Connected with the House of Industry, there is also an

Hospital, which was in the best order, and had, I am glad to say, many beds unoccupied. It had one fault, however, which is common to all American interiors: the presence of the eternal, accursed, suffocating, red-hot demon of a stove, whose breath would blight the purest air under Heaven.

There are two establishments for boys in this same neighbourhood. One is called the Boylston school, and is an asylum for neglected and indigent boys who have committed no crime, but who in the ordinary course of things would very soon be purged of that distinction if they were not taken from the hungry streets and sent here. The other is a House of Reformation for Juvenile Offenders. They are both under the same roof, but the two classes of boys never come in contact.

The Boylston boys, as may be readily supposed, have very much the advantage of the others in point of personal appearance. They were in their school-room when I came upon them, and answered correctly, without book, such questions as where was England; how far was it; what was its population; its capital city; its form of government; and so forth. They sang a song, too, about a farmer sowing his seed, with corresponding action at such parts as "'t is thus he sows," "he turns him round," "he claps his hands;" which gave it greater interest for them, and accustomed them to act together in an orderly manner. They appeared exceedingly well taught, and not better taught than fed; for a more chubby-looking, full-waistcoated set of boys, I never saw.

The juvenile offenders had not such pleasant faces by a great deal, and in this establishment there were many boys of colour. I saw them first at their work (basket-making, and the manufacture of palm-leaf hats), afterwards in their school, where they sang a chorus in praise of Liberty: an odd, and, one would think, rather aggravating, theme for prisoners. These boys were divided into four classes, each denoted by a numeral, worn on a badge upon the arm. On the arrival of a newcomer, he is put into the fourth or lowest class, and left, by good behaviour, to work his way up into the first. The design and object of this institution is to reclaim the youthful criminal by firm but kind and judicious treatment; to make his prison a place of purification and improvement, not of demoralisation and corruption; to impress upon him that there is but one path, and that one sober industry, which can ever lead him to

happiness; to teach him how it may be trodden, if his footsteps have never yet been led that way; and to lure him back to it if they have strayed: in a word, to snatch him from destruction, and restore him to society a penitent and useful member. The importance of such an establishment, in every point of view, and with reference to every consideration of humanity and social policy, requires no comment.

One other establishment closes the catalogue. It is the House of Correction for the State, in which silence is strictly maintained, but where the prisoners have the comfort and mental relief of seeing each other, and of working together. This is the improved system of Prison Discipline which we have imported into England, and which has been in successful operation among us for some years past.

America, as a new and not over-populated country, has in all her prisons the one great advantage of being enabled to find useful and profitable work for the inmates; whereas, with us, the prejudice against prison labour is naturally very strong, and almost insurmountable, when honest men, who have not offended against the laws, are frequently doomed to seek employment in vain. Even in the United States, the principle of bringing convict labour and free labour into a competition which must obviously be to the disadvantage of the latter has already found many opponents, whose number is not likely to diminish with access of years.

For this very reason, though, our best prisons would seem at the first glance to be better conducted than those of America. The treadmill is accompanied with little or no noise: five hundred men may pick oakum in the same room, without a sound; and both kinds of labour admit of such keen and vigilant superintendence as will render even a word of personal communication among the prisoners almost impossible. On the other hand, the noise of the loom, the forge, the carpenter's hammer, or the stone-mason's saw, greatly favour those opportunities of intercourse — hurried and brief, no doubt, but opportunities still — which these several kinds of work, by rendering it necessary for men to be employed very near to each other, and often side by side, without any barrier or partition between them, in their very nature present. A visitor, too, requires to reason and reflect a little before the sight of a number of men engaged in ordinary labour, such as he is accustomed to

out of doors, will impress him half as strongly as the contemplation of the same persons in the same place and garb would, if they were occupied in some task, marked and degraded everywhere as belonging only to felons in jails. In an American state prison or house of correction, I found it difficult at first to persuade myself that I was really in a jail: a place of ignominious punishment and endurance. And to this hour I very much question whether the humane boast that it is not like one has its root in the true wisdom or philosophy of the matter.

I hope I may not be misunderstood on this subject, for it is one in which I take a strong and deep interest. I incline as little to the sickly feeling which makes every canting lie or maudlin speech of a notorious criminal a subject of newspaper report and general sympathy as I do to those good old customs of the good old times which made England, even so recently as in the reign of the third King George, in respect of her criminal code and her prison regulations, one of the most bloody-minded and barbarous countries on the earth. If I thought it would do any good to the rising generation, I would cheerfully give my consent to the disinterment of the bones of any genteel highwayman (the more genteel, the more cheerfully), and to their exposure, piece-meal, on any sign-post, gate, or gibbet, that might be deemed a good elevation for the purpose. My reason is as well convinced that these gentry were utterly worthless and debauched villains, as it is that the laws and jails hardened them in their evil courses, or that their wonderful escapes were effected by the prison turnkeys who, in those admirable days, had always been felons themselves, and were, to the last, their bosom friends and pot-companions. At the same time I know, as all men do or should, that the subject of prison discipline is one of the highest importance to any community; and that in her sweeping reform and bright example to other countries on this head, America has shown great wisdom, great benevolence, and exalted policy. In contrasting her system with that which we have modelled upon it, I merely seek to show that, with all its drawbacks, ours has some advantages of its own.[1]

[1] Apart from profit made by the useful labour of prisoners which we can never hope to realise to any great extent, and which it is perhaps not expedient for us to try to gain, there are two prisons in London, in all respects equal,

The House of Correction, which has led to these remarks, is not walled, like other prisons, but is palisaded round about with tall rough stakes, something after the manner of an inclosure for keeping elephants in, as we see it represented in Eastern prints and pictures. The prisoners wear a parti-coloured dress; and those who are sentenced to hard labour, work at nail-making or stone-cutting. When I was there, the latter class of labourers were employed upon the stone for a new custom-house in course of erection at Boston. They appeared to shape it skilfully and with expedition, though there were very few among them (if any) who had not acquired the art within the prison gates.

The women, all in one large room, were employed in making light clothing, for New Orleans and the Southern States. They did their work in silence, like the men; and like them, were overlooked by the person contracting for their labour, or by some agent of his appointment. In addition to this, they are every moment liable to be visited by the prison officers appointed for that purpose.

The arrangements for cooking, washing of clothes, and so forth, are much upon the plan of those I have seen at home. Their mode of bestowing the prisoners at night (which is of general adoption) differs from ours, and is both simple and effective. In the centre of a lofty area, lighted by windows in the four walls, are five tiers of cells, one above the other; each tier having before it a light iron gallery, attainable by stairs of the same construction and material, excepting the lower one, which is on the ground. Behind these, back to back with them and facing the opposite wall, are five corresponding rows of cells, accessible by similar means, so that, supposing the prisoners locked up in their cells, an officer stationed on the ground, with his back to the wall, has half their number under his eye at once; the remaining half being

and in some decidedly superior, to any I saw or have ever heard or read of in America. One is the Tothill Fields Bridewell, conducted by Lieutenant A. F. Tracey, R. N.; the other the Middlesex House of Correction, superintended by Mr. Chesterton. This gentleman also holds an appointment in the Public Service. Both are enlightened and superior men; and it would be as difficult to find persons better qualified for the functions they discharge with firmness, zeal, intelligence, and humanity, as it would be to exceed the perfect order and arrangement of the institutions they govern.

equally under the observation of another officer on the opposite side; and all in one great apartment. Unless this watch be corrupted or sleeping on his post, it is impossible for a man to escape; for even in the event of his forcing the iron door of his cell without noise (which is exceedingly improbable), the moment he appears outside, and steps into that one of the five galleries on which it is situated, he must be plainly and fully visible to the officer below. Each of these cells holds a small truckle-bed, in which one prisoner sleeps; never more. It is small, of course; and the door being not solid, but grated, and without blind or curtain, the prisoner within is at all times exposed to the observation and inspection of any guard who may pass along that tier at any hour or minute of the night. Every day, the prisoners receive their dinner, singly, through a trap in the kitchen wall; and each man carries his to his sleeping cell to eat it, where he is locked up, alone, for that purpose, one hour. The whole of this arrangement struck me as being admirable; and I hope that the next new prison we erect in England may be built on this plan.

I was given to understand that in this prison no swords or fire-arms, or even cudgels, are kept; nor is it probable that, so long as its present excellent management continues, any weapon, offensive or defensive, will ever be required within its bounds.

Such are the institutions at South Boston! In all of them, the unfortunate or degenerate citizens of the State are carefully instructed in their duties both to God and man; are surrounded by all reasonable means of comfort and happiness that their condition will admit of; are appealed to, as members of the great human family, however afflicted, indigent, or fallen; are ruled by the strong Heart, and not by the strong (though immeasurably weaker) Hand. I have described them at some length: firstly, because their worth demanded it; and secondly, because I mean to take them for a model, and to content myself with saying of others we may come to, whose design and purpose are the same, that in this or that respect they practically fail, or differ.

I wish by this account of them, imperfect in its execution, but, in its just intention, honest, I could hope to convey to my readers one hundredth part of the gratification the sights I have described afforded me.

To an Englishman, accustomed to the paraphernalia of West-minster Hall, an American Court of Law is as odd a sight as, I suppose, an English Court of Law would be to an American. Except in the Supreme Court at Washington (where the judges wear a plain black robe), there is no such thing as a wig or gown connected with the administration of justice. The gen-tlemen of the bar, being barristers and attorneys, too (for there is no division of those functions as in England), are no more removed from their clients than attorneys in our Court for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors are from theirs. The jury are quite at home, and make themselves as comfortable as circum-stances will permit. The witness is so little elevated above, or put aloof from, the crowd in the court, that a stranger entering during a pause in the proceedings would find it diffi-cult to pick him out from the rest. And if it chanced to be a criminal trial, his eyes, in nine cases out of ten, would wander to the dock in search of the prisoner in vain; for that gentleman would most likely be lounging among the most dis-tinguished ornaments of the legal profession, whispering sugges-tions in his counsel's ear or making a toothpick out of an old quill with his penknife.

I could not but notice these differences when I visited the courts at Boston. I was much surprised at first, too, to observe that the counsel who interrogated the witness under examination at the time did so *sitting*. But seeing that he was also occupied in writing down the answers, and remember-ing that he was alone and had no "junior," I quickly consoled myself with the reflection that law was not quite so expensive an article here as at home; and that the absence of sundry formalities, which we regard as indispensable, had doubtless a very favourable influence upon the bill of costs.

In every court ample and commodious provision is made for the accommodation of the citizens. This is the case all through America. In every public institution, the right of the people to attend, and to have an interest in the proceedings, is most fully and distinctly recognised. There are no grim door-keep-ers to dole out their tardy civility by the sixpennyworth; nor is there, I sincerely believe, any insolence of office of any kind. Nothing national is exhibited for money; and no pub-lic officer is a showman. We have begun of late years to imitate this good example. I hope we shall continue to do so;

and that, in the fulness of time, even deans and chapters may be converted.

In the civil court an action was trying for damages sustained in some accident upon a railway. The witnesses had been examined, and counsel was addressing the jury. The learned gentleman (like a few of his English brethren) was desperately long-winded, and had a remarkable capacity of saying the same thing over and over again. His great theme was "Warren the ĕn*gine* driver," whom he pressed into the service of every sentence he uttered. I listened to him for about a quarter of an hour; and coming out of court at the expiration of that time, without the faintest ray of enlightenment as to the merits of the case, felt as if I were at home again.

In the prisoners' cell, waiting to be examined by the magistrate on a charge of theft, was a boy. This lad, instead of being committed to a common jail, would be sent to the asylum at South Boston, and there taught a trade; and in the course of time he would be bound apprentice to some respectable master. Thus his detection in this offence, instead of being the prelude to a life of infamy and a miserable death, would lead, there was a reasonable hope, to his being reclaimed from vice, and becoming a worthy member of society.

I am by no means a wholesale admirer of our legal solemnities, many of which impress me as being exceedingly ludicrous. Strange as it may seem, too, there is undoubtedly a degree of protection in the wig and gown — a dismissal of individual responsibility in dressing for the part — which encourages that insolent bearing and language, and that gross perversion of the office of a pleader for The Truth, so frequent in our courts of law. Still, I cannot help doubting whether America, in her desire to shake off the absurdities and abuses of the old system, may not have gone too far into the opposite extreme; and whether it is not desirable, especially in the small community of a city like this, where each man knows the other, to surround the administration of justice with some artificial barriers against the "Hail fellow, well met" deportment of every-day life. All the aid it can have in the very high character and ability of the Bench, not only here but elsewhere, it has, and well deserves to have; but it may need something more: not to impress the thoughtful and the well-informed, but the ignorant and heedless; a class which includes some prisoners and

many witnesses. These institutions were established, no doubt, upon the principle that those who had so large a share in making the laws would certainly respect them. But experience has proved this hope to be fallacious; for no men know better than the judges of America that on the occasion of any great popular excitement the law is powerless, and cannot, for the time, assert its own supremacy.

The tone of society in Boston is one of perfect politeness, courtesy, and good breeding. The ladies are unquestionably very beautiful — in face: but there I am compelled to stop. Their education is much as with us; neither better nor worse. I had heard some very marvellous stories in this respect; but not believing them, was not disappointed. Blue ladies there are, in Boston; but like philosophers of that colour and sex in most other latitudes, they rather desire to be thought superior than to be so. Evangelical ladies there are, likewise, whose attachment to the forms of religion, and horror of theatrical entertainments, are most exemplary. Ladies who have a passion for attending lectures are to be found among all classes and all conditions. In the kind of provincial life which prevails in cities such as this, the Pulpit has great influence. The peculiar province of the Pulpit in New England (always excepting the Unitarian ministry) would appear to be the denouncement of all innocent and rational amusements. The church, the chapel, and the lecture-room are the only means of excitement excepted; and to the church, the chapel, and the lecture-room, the ladies resort in crowds.

Wherever religion is resorted to, as a strong drink, and as an escape from the dull monotonous round of home, those of its ministers who pepper the highest will be the surest to please. They who strew the Eternal Path with the greatest amount of brimstone, and who most ruthlessly tread down the flowers and leaves that grow by the wayside, will be voted the most righteous; and they who enlarge with the greatest pertinacity on the difficulty of getting into heaven will be considered by all true believers certain of going there, though it would be hard to say by what process of reasoning this conclusion is arrived at. It is so at home, and it is so abroad. With regard to the other means of excitement, the Lecture, it has at least the merit of being always new. One lecture treads so quickly on the heels of another that none are remembered;

and the course of this month may be safely repeated next, with its charm of novelty unbroken, and its interest unabated.

The fruits of the earth have their growth in corruption. Out of the rottenness of these things, there has sprung up in Boston a sect of philosophers known as Transcendentalists. On inquiring what this appellation might be supposed to signify, I was given to understand that whatever was unintelligible would be certainly transcendental. Not deriving much comfort from this elucidation, I pursued the inquiry still farther, and found that the Transcendentalists are followers of my friend Mr. Carlyle, or I should rather say, of a follower of his, Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson. This gentleman has written a volume of Essays, in which, among much that is dreamy and fanciful (if he will pardon me for saying so), there is much more that is true and manly, honest and bold. Transcendentalism has its occasional vagaries (what school has not?), but it has good healthful qualities in spite of them; not least among the number a hearty disgust of Cant, and an aptitude to detect her in all the million varieties of her everlasting wardrobe. And, therefore, if I were a Bostonian, I think I would be a Transcendentalist.

The only preacher I heard in Boston was Mr. Taylor, who addresses himself peculiarly to seamen, and who was once a mariner himself. I found his chapel down among the shipping, in one of the narrow, old, water-side streets, with a gay blue flag waving freely from its roof. In the gallery opposite to the pulpit were a little choir of male and female singers, a violoncello, and a violin. The preacher already sat in the pulpit, which was raised on pillars, and ornamented behind him with painted drapery of a lively and somewhat theatrical appearance. He looked a weather-beaten, hard-featured man, of about six or eight and fifty; with deep lines graven as it were into his face, dark hair, and a stern, keen eye. Yet the general character of his countenance was pleasant and agreeable.

The service commenced with a hymn, to which succeeded an extemporary prayer. It had the fault of frequent repetition, incidental to all such prayers; but it was plain and comprehensive in its doctrines, and breathed a tone of general sympathy and charity, which is not so commonly a characteristic of this form of address to the Deity as it might be. That done he opened his discourse, taking for his text a passage from the

Song of Solomon, laid upon the desk before the commencement of the service by some unknown member of the congregation: "Who is this coming up from the wilderness, leaning on the arm of her beloved!"

He handled his text in all kinds of ways, and twisted it into all manner of shapes; but always ingeniously, and with a rude eloquence, well adapted to the comprehension of his hearers. Indeed, if I be not mistaken, he studied their sympathies and understandings much more than the display of his own powers. His imagery was all drawn from the sea, and from the incidents of a seaman's life; and was often remarkably good. He spoke to them of "that glorious man, Lord Nelson," and of Collingwood; and drew nothing in, as the saying is, by the head and shoulders, but brought it to bear upon his purpose, naturally, and with a sharp mind to its effect. Sometimes, when much excited with his subject, he had an odd way — compounded of John Bunyan and Balfour of Burley — of taking his great quarto Bible under his arm and pacing up and down the pulpit with it; looking steadily down, meantime, into the midst of the congregation. Thus, when he applied his text to the first assemblage of his hearers, and pictured the wonder of the church at their presumption in forming a congregation among themselves, he stopped short with his Bible under his arm in the manner I have described, and pursued his discourse after this manner: —

"Who are these — who are they — who are these fellows? Where do they come from? Where are they going to? — Come from! What 's the answer?" — leaning out of the pulpit, and pointing downward with his right hand: "From below!" — starting back again, and looking at the sailors before him: "From below, my brethren. From under the hatches of sin, battened down above you by the Evil One. That 's where you came from!" — a walk up and down the pulpit: "And where are you going" — stopping abruptly: "Where are you going? Aloft!" — very softly, and pointing upward: "Aloft!" — louder: "Aloft!" — louder still: "That 's where you are going — with a fair wind, — all taut and trim, steering direct for Heaven in its glory, where there are no storms or foul weather, and where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." — Another walk: "That 's where you 're going to, my friends. That 's it. That 's the place. That 's the port.

That 's the haven. It 's a blessed harbour — still water there, in all changes of the winds and tides; no driving ashore upon the rocks, or slipping your cables and running out to sea, there: Peace — Peace — Peace — all peace!" — Another walk, and patting the Bible under his left arm: "What! These fellows are coming from the wilderness, are they? Yes. From the dreary, blighted wilderness of Iniquity, whose only crop is Death. But do they lean upon anything — do they lean upon nothing, these poor seamen?" — Three raps upon the Bible: "Oh, yes. — Yes. — They lean upon the arm of their Beloved" — three more raps — "upon the arm of their Beloved" — three more, and a walk: "Pilot, guiding-star, and compass, all in one, to all hands — here it is" — three more: "Here it is. They can do their seaman's duty manfully, and be easy in their minds in the utmost peril and danger, with this" — two more: "They can come, even these poor fellows can come, from the wilderness leaning on the arm of their Beloved, and go up — up — up!" — raising his hand higher and higher at every repetition of the word, so that he stood with it at last stretched above his head, regarding them in a strange, rapt manner, and pressing the book triumphantly to his breast, until he gradually subsided into some other portion of his discourse.

I have cited this rather as an instance of the preacher's eccentricities than his merits, though taken in connection with his look and manner, and the character of his audience, even this was striking. It is possible, however, that my favourable impression of him may have been greatly influenced and strengthened, firstly, by his impressing upon his hearers that the true observance of religion was not inconsistent with a cheerful deportment and an exact discharge of the duties of their station, which, indeed, it scrupulously required of them; and secondly, by his cautioning them not to set up any monopoly in Paradise and its mercies. I never heard these two points so wisely touched (if, indeed, I have ever heard them touched at all,) by any preacher of that kind, before.

Having passed the time I spent in Boston, in making myself acquainted with these things, in settling the course I should take in my future travels, and in mixing constantly with its society, I am not aware that I have any occasion to prolong this chapter. Such of its social customs as I have not mentioned, however, may be told in a very few words.

The usual dinner-hour is two o'clock. A dinner party takes place at five; and at an evening party, they seldom sup later than eleven; so that it goes hard but one gets home, even from a rout, by midnight. I never could find out any difference between a party at Boston and a party in London, saving that at the former place all assemblies are held at more rational hours; that the conversation may possibly be a little louder and more cheerful; that a guest is usually expected to ascend to the very top of the house to take his cloak off; that he is certain to see, at every dinner, an unusual amount of poultry on the table; and at every supper, at least two mighty bowls of hot stewed oysters, in any one of which a half-grown Duke of Clarence might be smothered easily.

There are two theatres in Boston, of good size and construction, but sadly in want of patronage. The few ladies who resort to them sit, as of right, in the front rows of the boxes.

The bar is a large room with a stone floor, and there people stand and smoke, and lounge about, all the evening, dropping in and out as the humour takes them. There too the stranger is initiated into the mysteries of Gin-sling, Cocktail, Sangaree, Mint Julep, Sherry-cobbler, Timber Doodle, and other rare drinks. The House is full of boarders, both married and single, many of whom sleep upon the premises, and contract by the week for their board and lodging, the charge for which diminishes as they go nearer the sky to roost. A public table is laid in a very handsome hall for breakfast, and for dinner, and for supper. The party sitting down together to these meals will vary in number from one to two hundred, sometimes more. The advent of each of these epochs in the day is proclaimed by an awful gong, which shakes the very window frames as it reverberates through the house, and horribly disturbs nervous foreigners. There is an ordinary for ladies, and an ordinary for gentlemen.

In our private room the cloth could not, for any earthly consideration, have been laid for dinner without a huge glass dish of cranberries in the middle of the table; and breakfast would have been no breakfast unless the principal dish were a deformed beefsteak with a great flat bone in the centre, swimming in hot butter, and sprinkled with the very blackest of all possible pepper. Our bedroom was spacious and airy, but (like every bedroom on this side of the Atlantic) very bare of

furniture, having no curtains to the French bedstead or to the window. It had one unusual luxury, however, in the shape of a wardrobe of painted wood, something smaller than an English watch-box; or if this comparison should be insufficient to convey a just idea of its dimensions, they may be estimated from the fact of my having lived for fourteen days and nights in the firm belief that it was a shower-bath.

CHAPTER IV

AN AMERICAN RAILROAD. LOWELL AND ITS FACTORY SYSTEM.

BEFORE leaving Boston, I devoted one day to an excursion to Lowell. I assign a separate chapter to this visit, not because I am about to describe it at any great length, but because I remember it as a thing by itself, and am desirous that my readers should do the same.

I made acquaintance with an American railroad, on this occasion, for the first time. As these works are pretty much alike all through the States, their general characteristics are easily described.

There are no first and second class carriages as with us; but there is a gentleman's car and a ladies' car, the main distinction between which is that in the first, everybody smokes; and in the second, nobody does. As a black man never travels with a white one, there is also a negro car; which is a great blundering clumsy chest, such as Gulliver put to sea in, from the kingdom of Brobdingnag. There is a great deal of jolting, a great deal of noise, a great deal of wall, not much window, a locomotive engine, a shriek, and a bell.

The cars are like shabby omnibuses, but larger, holding thirty, forty, fifty, people. The seats, instead of stretching from end to end, are placed crosswise. Each seat holds two persons. There is a long row of them on each side of the caravan, a narrow passage up the middle, and a door at both ends. In the centre of the carriage there is usually a stove, fed with charcoal or anthracite coal, which is for the most part red-hot. It is insufferably close; and you see the hot air fluttering between yourself and any other object you may happen to look at, like the ghost of smoke.

In the ladies' car, there are a great many gentlemen who have ladies with them. There are also a great many ladies who have nobody with them; for any lady may travel alone, from one end of the United States to the other, and be certain

of the most courteous and considerate treatment everywhere. The conductor or check-taker, or guard, or whatever he may be, wears no uniform. He walks up and down the car, and in and out of it, as his fancy dictates; leans against the door with his hands in his pockets and stares at you, if you chance to be a stranger; or enters into conversation with the passengers about him. A great many newspapers are pulled out, and a few of them are read. Everybody talks to you, or to anybody else who hits his fancy. If you are an Englishman, he expects that that railroad is pretty much like an English railroad. If you say "No," he says "Yes?" (interrogatively), and asks in what respect they differ. You enumerate the heads of difference, one by one, and he says "Yes?" (still interrogatively) to each. Then he guesses that you don't travel faster in England; and on your replying that you do, says "Yes?" again (still interrogatively), and, it is quite evident, don't believe it. After a long pause he remarks, partly to you, and partly to the knob on the top of his stick, that "Yankees are reckoned to be considerable of a go-ahead people, too;" upon which *you* say "Yes," and then *he* says "Yes" again (affirmatively this time); and upon your looking out of window, tells you that behind that hill, and some three miles from the next station, there is a clever town in a smart lo-ca-tion, where he expects you have con-cluded to stop. Your answer in the negative naturally leads to more questions in reference to your intended route (always pronounced rout); and wherever you are going, you invariably learn that you can't get there without immense difficulty and danger, and that all the great sights are somewhere else.

If a lady take a fancy to any male passenger's seat, the gentleman who accompanies her gives him notice of the fact, and he immediately vacates it with great politeness. Politics are much discussed, so are banks, so is cotton. Quiet people avoid the question of the Presidency, for there will be a new election in three years and a half, and party feeling runs very high: the great constitutional feature of this institution being that directly the acrimony of the last election is over, the acrimony of the next one begins; which is an unspeakable comfort to all strong politicians and true lovers of their country, — that is to say, to ninety-nine men and boys out of every ninety-nine and a quarter.

Except when a branch road joins the main one, there is seldom more than one track of rails; so that the road is very narrow, and the view, where there is a deep cutting, by no means extensive. When there is not, the character of the scenery is always the same. Mile after mile of stunted trees, some hewn down by the axe, some blown down by the wind, some half fallen and resting on their neighbours, many mere logs half hidden in the swamp, others mouldered away to spongy chips. The very soil of the earth is made up of minute fragments such as these; each pool of stagnant water has its crust of vegetable rottenness; on every side there are the boughs, and trunks, and stumps of trees, in every possible stage of decay, decomposition, and neglect. Now you emerge for a few brief minutes on an open country, glittering with some bright lake or pool, broad as many an English river, but so small here that it scarcely has a name; now catch hasty glimpses of a distant town, with its clean white houses and their cool piazzas, its prim New England church and school-house; when whir-r-r-r! almost before you have seen them, comes the same dark screen, the stunted trees, the stumps, the logs, the stagnant water — all so like the last that you seem to have been transported back again by magic.

The train calls at stations in the woods, where the wild impossibility of anybody having the smallest reason to get out is only to be equalled by the apparently desperate hopelessness of there being anybody to get in. It rushes across the turnpike road, where there is no gate, no policeman, no signal: nothing but a rough wooden arch, on which is painted "WHEN THE BELL RINGS, LOOK OUT FOR THE LOCOMOTIVE." On it whirls headlong, dives through the woods again, emerges in the light, clatters over frail arches, rumbles upon the heavy ground, shoots beneath a wooden bridge which intercepts the light for a second like a wink, suddenly awakens all the slumbering echoes in the main street of a large town, and dashes on haphazard, pell-mell, neck or nothing, down the middle of the road. There — with mechanics working at their trades, and people leaning from their doors and windows, and boys flying kites and playing marbles, and men smoking, and women talking, and children crawling, and pigs burrowing, and unaccustomed horses plunging and rearing, close to the very rails — there — on, on, on — tears the mad dragon of an engine with

its train of cars; scattering in all directions a shower of burning sparks from its wood fire; screeching, hissing, yelling, panting; until at last the thirsty monster stops beneath a covered way to drink, the people cluster round, and you have time to breathe again.

I was met at the station at Lowell by a gentleman intimately connected with the management of the factories there; and gladly putting myself under his guidance, drove off at once to that quarter of the town in which the works, the object of my visit, were situated. Although only just of age — for, if my recollection serve me, it has been a manufacturing town barely one and twenty years — Lowell is a large, populous, thriving place. Those indications of its youth which first attract the eye give it a quaintness and oddity of character which, to a visitor from the old country, is amusing enough. It was a very dirty winter's day, and nothing in the whole town looked old to me, except the mud, which in some parts was almost knee-deep, and might have been deposited there, on the subsiding of the waters after the Deluge. In one place, there was a new wooden church, which, having no steeple, and being yet unpainted, looked like an enormous packing-case without any direction upon it. In another there was a large hotel, whose walls and colonnades were so crisp, and thin, and slight, that it had exactly the appearance of being built with cards. I was careful not to draw my breath as we passed, and trembled when I saw a workman come out upon the roof, lest with one thoughtless stamp of his foot he should crush the structure beneath him, and bring it rattling down. The very river that moves the machinery in the mills (for they are all worked by water power) seems to acquire a new character from the fresh buildings of bright red brick and painted wood among which it takes its course; and to be as light-headed, thoughtless, and brisk a young river, in its murmurings and tumblings, as one would desire to see. One would swear that every "Bakery," "Grocery," and "Book-bindery," and other kind of store, took its shutters down for the first time, and started in business yesterday. The golden pestles and mortars fixed as signs upon the sun-blind frames outside the druggists' appear to have been just turned out of the United States Mint; and when I saw a baby of some week or ten days old in a woman's arms at a street corner, I found myself unconsciously wondering

where it came from, never supposing for an instant that it could have been born in such a young town as that.

There are several factories in Lowell, each of which belongs to what we should term a Company of Proprietors, but what they call in America a Corporation. I went over several of these, such as a woollen factory, a carpet factory, and a cotton factory; examined them in every part; and saw them in their ordinary working aspect, with no preparation of any kind, or departure from their ordinary every-day proceedings. I may add that I am well acquainted with our manufacturing towns in England, and have visited many mills in Manchester and elsewhere in the same manner.

I happened to arrive at the first factory just as the dinner hour was over, and the girls were returning to their work; indeed, the stairs of the mill were thronged with them as I ascended. They were all well dressed, but not to my thinking above their condition; for I like to see the humbler classes of society careful of their dress and appearance, and even, if they please, decorated with such little trinkets as come within the compass of their means. Supposing it confined within reasonable limits, I would always encourage this kind of pride, as a worthy element of self-respect, in any person I employed; and should no more be deterred from doing so, because some wretched female referred her fall to a love of dress, than I would allow my construction of the real intent and meaning of the Sabbath to be influenced by any warning to the well-disposed, founded on his backslidings on that particular day, which might emanate from the rather doubtful authority of a murderer in Newgate.

These girls, as I have said, were all well dressed; and that phrase necessarily includes extreme cleanliness. They had serviceable bonnets, good warm cloaks and shawls; and were not above clogs and pattens. Moreover, there were places in the mill in which they could deposit these things without injury; and there were conveniences for washing. They were healthy in appearance, many of them remarkably so, and had the manners and deportment of young women: not of degraded brutes of burden. If I had seen in one of those mills (but I did not, though I looked for something of this kind with a sharp eye) the most lisping, mincing, affected, and ridiculous young creature that my imagination could suggest, I should have thought

of the careless, moping, slatternly, degraded, dull reverse (*I have* seen that), and should have been still well pleased to look upon her.

The rooms in which they worked were as well ordered as themselves. In the windows of some, there were green plants, which were trained to shade the glass; in all there was as much fresh air, cleanliness, and comfort as the nature of the occupation would possibly admit of. Out of so large a number of females, many of whom were only then just verging upon womanhood, it may be reasonably supposed that some were delicate and fragile in appearance; no doubt there were. But I solemnly declare that, from all the crowd I saw in the different factories that day, I cannot recall or separate one young face that gave me a painful impression; not one young girl whom, assuming it to be matter of necessity that she should gain her daily bread by the labour of her hands, I would have removed from those works if I had had the power.

They reside in various boarding-houses near at hand. The owners of the mills are particularly careful to allow no persons to enter upon the possession of these houses, whose characters have not undergone the most searching and thorough inquiry. Any complaint that is made against them, by the boarders, or by any one else, is fully investigated; and if good ground of complaint be shown to exist against them, they are removed, and their occupation is handed over to some more deserving person. There are a few children employed in these factories, but not many. The laws of the State forbid their working more than nine months in the year, and require that they be educated during the other three. For this purpose there are schools in Lowell; and there are churches and chapels of various persuasions, in which the young women may observe that form of worship in which they have been educated.

At some distance from the factories, and on the highest and pleasantest ground in the neighbourhood, stands their hospital, or boarding-house for the sick: it is the best house in those parts, and was built by an eminent merchant for his own residence. Like that institution at Boston, which I have before described, it is not parcelled out into wards, but is divided into convenient chambers, each of which has all the comforts of a very comfortable home. The principal medical attendant resides under the same roof; and were the patients members

of his own family, they could not be better cared for, or attended with greater gentleness and consideration. The weekly charge in this establishment for each female patient is three dollars, or twelve shillings English; but no girl employed by any of the corporations is ever excluded for want of the means of payment. That they do not very often want the means may be gathered from the fact, that in July, 1841, no fewer than nine hundred and seventy-eight of these girls were depositors in the Lowell Savings Bank: the amount of whose joint savings was estimated at one hundred thousand dollars, or twenty thousand English pounds.

I am now going to state three facts, which will startle a large class of readers on this side of the Atlantic very much.

Firstly, there is a joint-stock piano in a great many of the boarding-houses. Secondly, nearly all these young ladies subscribe to circulating libraries. Thirdly, they have got up among themselves a periodical called THE LOWELL OFFERING, "A repository of original articles, written exclusively by females actively employed in the mills," — which is duly printed, published, and sold; and whereof I brought away from Lowell four hundred good solid pages, which I have read from beginning to end.

The large class of readers, startled by these facts, will exclaim, with one voice, "How very preposterous!" On my deferentially inquiring why, they will answer, "These things are above their station." In reply to that objection, I would beg to ask what their station is.

It is their station to work. And they *do* work. They labour in these mills, upon an average, twelve hours a day, which is unquestionably work, and pretty tight work too. Perhaps it is above their station to indulge in such amusements, on any terms. Are we quite sure that we in England have not formed our ideas of the "station" of working people from accustoming ourselves to the contemplation of that class as they are, and not as they might be? I think that if we examine our own feelings, we shall find that the pianos, and the circulating libraries, and even the Lowell Offering, startle us by their novelty, and not by their bearing upon any abstract question of right or wrong.

For myself, I know no station in which the occupation of to-day cheerfully done and the occupation of to-morrow cheer-

fully looked to, any one of these pursuits is not most humanising and laudable. I know no station which is rendered more endurable to the person in it, or more safe to the person out of it, by having ignorance for its associate. I know no station which has a right to monopolise the means of mutual instruction, improvement, and rational entertainment; or which has ever continued to be a station very long, after seeking to do so.

Of the merits of the Lowell Offering as a literary production, I will only observe, putting entirely out of sight the fact of the articles having been written by these girls after the arduous labours of the day, that it will compare advantageously with a great many English Annuals. It is pleasant to find that many of its tales are of the mills and of those who work in them; that they inculcate habits of self-denial and contentment, and teach good doctrines of enlarged benevolence. A strong feeling for the beauties of nature, as displayed in the solitudes the writers have left at home, breathes through its pages like wholesome village air; and though a circulating library is a favourable school for the study of such topics, it has very scant allusion to fine clothes, fine marriages, fine houses, or fine life. Some persons might object to the papers being signed occasionally with rather fine names, but this is an American fashion. One of the provinces of the State Legislature of Massachusetts is to alter ugly names into pretty ones, as the children improve upon the tastes of their parents. These changes costing little or nothing, scores of Mary Anns are solemnly converted into Bevelinas every session.

It is said that on the occasion of a visit from General Jackson or General Harrison to this town (I forget which, but it is not to the purpose), he walked through three miles and a half of these young ladies, all dressed out with parasols and silk stockings. But as I am not aware that any worse consequence ensued than a sudden looking-up of all the parasols and silk stockings in the market, and perhaps the bankruptcy of some speculative New Englander who bought them all up at any price, in expectation of a demand that never came, I set no great store by the circumstance.

In this brief account of Lowell, and inadequate expression of the gratification it yielded me, and cannot fail to afford to any foreigner to whom the condition of such people at home is a subject of interest and anxious speculation, I have carefully

abstained from drawing a comparison between these factories and those of our own land. Many of the circumstances whose strong influence has been at work for years in our manufacturing towns have not arisen here; and there is no manufacturing population in Lowell, so to speak, for these girls (often the daughters of small farmers) come from other States, remain a few years in the mills, and then go home for good.

The contrast would be a strong one, for it would be between the Good and Evil, the living light and deepest shadow. I abstain from it, because I deem it just to do so. But I only the more earnestly adjure all those whose eyes may rest on these pages to pause and reflect upon the difference between this town and those great haunts of desperate misery; to call to mind, if they can in the midst of party strife and squabble, the efforts that must be made to purge them of their suffering and danger; and last, and foremost, to remember how the precious Time is rushing by.

I returned at night by the same railroad and in the same kind of car. One of the passengers being exceedingly anxious to expound at great length to my companion (not to me, of course) the true principles on which books of travel in America should be written by Englishmen, I feigned to fall asleep. But glancing all the way out at window from the corners of my eyes, I found abundance of entertainment for the rest of the ride in watching the effects of the wood fire, which had been invisible in the morning, but were now brought out in full relief by the darkness; for we were travelling in a whirlwind of bright sparks, which showered about us like a storm of fiery snow.

CHAPTER V

WORCESTER. THE CONNECTICUT RIVER. HARTFORD. NEW HAVEN. TO NEW YORK.

LEAVING Boston on the afternoon of Saturday the fifth of February, we proceeded by another railroad to Worcester, a pretty New England town, where we had arranged to remain under the hospitable roof of the Governor of the State until Monday morning.

These towns and cities of New England (many of which would be villages in Old England) are as favourable specimens of rural America as their people are of rural Americans. The well-trimmed lawns and green meadows of home are not there, and the grass, compared with our ornamental plots and pastures, is rank, and rough, and wild; but delicate slopes of land, gently swelling hills, wooded valleys, and slender streams, abound. Every little colony of houses has its church and school-house peeping from among the white roofs and shady trees; every house is the whitest of the white; every Venetian blind the greenest of the green; every fine day's sky the bluest of the blue. A sharp dry wind and a slight frost had so hardened the roads when we alighted at Worcester that their furrowed tracks were like ridges of granite. There was the usual aspect of newness on every object, of course. All the buildings looked as if they had been built and painted that morning, and could be taken down on Monday with very little trouble. In the keen evening air, every sharp outline looked a hundred times sharper than ever. The clean cardboard colonnades had no more perspective than a Chinese bridge on a teacup, and appeared equally well calculated for use. The razor-like edges of the detached cottages seemed to cut the very wind as it whistled against them, and to send it smarting on its way with a shriller cry than before. Those slightly built wooden dwellings, behind which the sun was setting with a brilliant lustre, could be so looked through and through that the idea of any

inhabitant being able to hide himself from the public gaze, or to have any secrets from the public eye, was not entertainable for a moment. Even where a blazing fire shone through the uncurtained windows of some distant house, it had the air of being newly lighted, and of lacking warmth; and instead of awakening thoughts of a snug chamber, bright with faces that first saw the light round that same hearth, and ruddy with warm hangings, it came upon one suggestive of the smell of new mortar and damp walls.

So I thought, at least, that evening. Next morning when the sun was shining brightly, and the clear church bells were ringing, and sedate people in their best clothes enlivened the pathway near at hand and dotted the distant thread of road, there was a pleasant Sabbath peacefulness on everything, which it was good to feel. It would have been the better for an old church; better still for some old graves; but as it was, a wholesome repose and tranquillity pervaded the scene, which, after the restless ocean and the hurried city, had a doubly grateful influence on the spirits.

We went on next morning, still by railroad, to Springfield. From that place to Hartford, whither we were bound, is a distance of only five and twenty miles, but at that time of the year the roads were so bad that the journey would probably have occupied ten or twelve hours. Fortunately, however, the winter having been unusually mild, the Connecticut River was "open," or, in other words, not frozen. The captain of a small steamboat was going to make his first trip for the season that day (the second February trip, I believe, within the memory of man), and only waited for us to go on board. Accordingly, we went on board, with as little delay as might be. He was as good as his word, and started directly.

It certainly was not called a small steamboat without reason. I omitted to ask the question, but I should think it must have been of about half a pony power. Mr. Paap, the celebrated Dwarf, might have lived and died happily in the cabin, which was fitted with common sash-windows like an ordinary dwelling-house. These windows had bright red curtains, too, hung on slack strings across the lower panes, so that it looked like the parlour of a Lilliputian public-house, which had got afloat in a flood or some other water accident, and was drifting nobody knew where. But even in this chamber there was a

rocking-chair. It would be impossible to get on anywhere America, without a rocking-chair.

I am afraid to tell how many feet short the trees were how many feet narrow: to apply the words length and to such measurement would be a contradiction in terms I may state that we all kept the middle of the deck boat should unexpectedly tip over; and that the mist some surprising process of condensation, worked between the keel: the whole forming a warm sandwich, about three thick.

It rained all day as I once thought it never did rain where, but in the Highlands of Scotland. The river was of floating blocks of ice, which were constantly cracking under us; and the depth of water, in the took to avoid the larger masses, carried down the river by the current, did not exceed a few inches. Nevertheless, we moved onward, dexterously; and being well up, bade defiance to the weather, and enjoyed the The Connecticut River is a fine stream, and the summer time are, I have no doubt, beautiful: at all was told so by a young lady in the cabin, and she a judge of beauty, if the possession of a quality appreciation of it, for a more beautiful creature I never upon.

After two hours and a half of this cold travelling a stoppage at a small town, where we were saluted considerably bigger than our own chimneys, we reached Hartford, and straightway repaired to an extremely comfortable except, as usual, in the article of bedrooms, which every place we visited, were very conducive to early rising.

We tarried here four days. The town is beautifully in a basin of green hills, the soil is rich, well wooded, carefully improved. It is the seat of the local legislature Connecticut, which says lately enacted, in by-gone times, renowned code of "Blue Laws," in virtue whereof, among other enlightened provisions, any citizen who could be proved to have kissed his wife on Sunday was punishable, I believe with the stocks. Too much of the old Puritan spirit exists these parts to the present hour; but its influence has tended, that I know, to make the people less hard in bargains, or more equal in their dealings. As I never

of its working that effect anywhere else, I infer that it never will here. Indeed, I am accustomed, with reference to great professions and severe faces, to judge of the goods of the other world pretty much as I judge of the goods of this; and whenever I see a dealer in such commodities with too great a display of them in his window, I doubt the quality of the article within.

In Hartford stands the famous oak in which the charter of King Charles was hidden. It is now inclosed in a gentleman's garden. In the State House is the charter itself. I found the courts of law here just the same as at Boston; the public institutions almost as good. The Insane Asylum is admirably conducted, and so is the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb.

I very much questioned within myself, as I walked through the Insane Asylum, whether I should have known the attendants from the patients, but for the few words which passed between the former and the doctor, in reference to the persons under their charge. Of course I limit this remark merely to their looks; for the conversation of the mad people was mad enough.

There was one little prim old lady, of very smiling and good-humoured appearance, who came sidling up to me from the end of a long passage, and, with a curtsey of inexpressible condescension, propounded this unaccountable inquiry: —

"Does Pontefract still flourish, sir, upon the soil of England?"

"He does, ma'am," I rejoined.

"When you last saw him, sir, he was —"

"Well, ma'am," said I, "extremely well. He begged me to present his compliments. I never saw him looking better."

At this, the old lady was very much delighted. After glancing at me for a moment, as if to be quite sure that I was serious in my respectful air, she sidled back some paces; sidled forward again; made a sudden skip (at which I precipitately retreated a step or two); and said: —

"*I* am an antediluvian, sir."

I thought the best thing to say was that I had suspected as much from the first. Therefore I said so.

"It is an extremely proud and pleasant thing, sir, to be an antediluvian," said the old lady.

"I should think it was, ma'am," I rejoined.

The old lady kissed her hand, gave another skip, smirked and sidled down the gallery in a most extraordinary manner, and ambled gracefully into her own bed-chamber.

In another part of the building, there was a male patient in bed, very much flushed and heated.

"Well!" said he, starting up, and pulling off his nightcap: "it 's all settled, at last. I have arranged it with Queen Victoria."

"Arranged what?" asked the doctor.

"Why, that business," passing his hand wearily across his forehead, "about the siege of New York."

"Oh!" said I, like a man suddenly enlightened. For he looked at me for an answer.

"Yes. Every house without a signal will be fired upon by the British troops. No harm will be done to the others. No harm at all. Those that want to be safe must hoist flags. That 's all they 'll have to do. They must hoist flags."

Even while he was speaking he seemed, I thought, to have some faint idea that his talk was incoherent. Directly he had said these words, he lay down again; gave a kind of a groan; and covered his hot head with the blankets.

There was another: a young man, whose madness was love and music. After playing on the accordion a march he had composed, he was very anxious that I should walk into his chamber, which I immediately did.

By way of being very knowing, and humouring him to the top of his bent, I went to the window, which commanded a beautiful prospect, and remarked, with an address upon which I greatly plumed myself: —

"What a delicious country you have about these lodgings of yours."

"Poh!" said he, moving his fingers carelessly over the notes of his instrument: "*well enough for such an institution as this!*"

I don't think I was ever so taken aback in all my life.

"I come here just for a whim," he said coolly. "That 's all."

"Oh! That 's all!" said I.

"Yes! That 's all. The doctor 's a smart man. He quite enters into it. It 's a joke of mine. I like it for a time.

You need n't mention it, but I think I shall go out next Tuesday!"

I assured him that I would consider our interview perfectly confidential; and rejoined the doctor. As we were passing through a gallery on our way out, a well-dressed lady, of quiet and composed manners, came up, and, proffering a slip of paper and a pen, begged that I would oblige her with an autograph. I complied, and we parted.

"I think I remember having had a few interviews like that with ladies out of doors. I hope *she* is not mad?"

"Yes."

"On what subject? Autographs?"

"No. She hears voices in the air."

"Well!" thought I, "it would be well if we could shut up a few false prophets of these later times, who have professed to do the same; and I should like to try the experiment on a Mormonist or two to begin with."

In this place there is the best jail for untried offenders in the world. There is also a very well-ordered State prison, arranged upon the same plan as that at Boston, except that here there is always a sentry on the wall with a loaded gun. It contained at that time about two hundred prisoners. A spot was shown me in the sleeping ward, where a watchman was murdered some years since in the dead of night, in a desperate attempt to escape, made by a prisoner who had broken from his cell. A woman, too, was pointed out to me, who, for the murder of her husband, had been a close prisoner for sixteen years.

"Do you think," I asked of my conductor, "that, after so very long an imprisonment, she has any thought or hope of ever regaining her liberty?"

"Oh, dear, yes," he answered; "to be sure she has."

"She has no chance of obtaining it, I suppose?"

"Well, I don't know:" which, by the bye, is a national answer. "Her friends mistrust her."

"What have *they* to do with it?" I naturally inquired.

"Well, they won't petition."

"But if they did, they could n't get her out, I suppose?"

"Well, not the first time, perhaps, nor yet the second, but time and wearying for a few years might do it."

"Does that ever do it?"

"Why, yes, that 'll do it sometimes. Polit[illegible] do it sometimes. It 's pretty often done, one [illegible]

I shall always entertain a very pleasant and [illegible] lection of Hartford. It is a lovely place, and I [illegible] friends there, whom I can never remember with [illegible] We left it with no little regret on the evening [illegible] 11th, and travelled that night by railroad to New [illegible] Upon the way, the guard and I were formally [illegible] each other (as we usually were on such [illegible] exchanged a variety of small talk. We reached New Ha[illegible] about eight o'clock, after a journey of three hours, [illegible] for the night at the best inn.

New Haven, known also as the City of Elms, is a [illegible] Many of its streets (as its *alias* sufficiently [illegible] planted with rows of grand old elm-trees, and the same [illegible] ornaments surround Yale College, an establishment [illegible] able eminence and reputation. The various [illegible] this institution are erected in a kind of park [illegible] middle of the town, where they are dimly [illegible] shadowing trees. The effect is very like that of [illegible] dral yard in England; and when their branches are [illegible] must be extremely picturesque. Even in the [illegible] these groups of well-grown trees, clustering [illegible] streets and houses of a thriving city, have a [illegible] appearance; seeming to bring about a kind of [illegible] between town and country, as if each had met [illegible] way, and shaken hands upon it; which is at [illegible] pleasant.

After a night's rest, we rose early, and in good [illegible] down to the wharf, and on board the packet New [illegible] New York. This was the first American steamboat [illegible] that I had seen, and certainly to an English eye it was [illegible] nitely less like a steamboat than a huge floating bath. I [illegible] hardly persuade myself, indeed, but that the bath [illegible] ment off Westminster Bridge, which I left a baby, [illegible] denly grown to an enormous size, run away from [illegible] set up in foreign parts as a steamer. Being in America [illegible] which our vagabonds do so particularly favour, it seemed more probable.

The great difference in appearance between these [illegible] and ours is that there is so much of them out of the [illegible]

the main deck being inclosed on all sides, and filled with casks and goods, like any second or third floor in a stack of warehouses; and the promenade or hurricane-deck being atop of that again. A part of the machinery is always above this deck; where the connecting rod, in a strong and lofty frame, is seen working away like an iron top-sawyer. There is seldom any mast or tackle; nothing aloft but two tall black chimneys. The man at the helm is shut up in a little house in the fore part of the boat (the wheel being connected with the rudder by iron chains, working the whole length of the deck); and the passengers, unless the weather be very fine, indeed, usually congregate below. Directly you have left the wharf, all the life, and stir, and bustle of a packet cease. You wonder for a long time how she goes on, for there seems to be nobody in charge of her; and when another of these dull machines comes splashing by, you feel quite indignant with it, as a sullen, cumbrous, ungraceful, unshiplike leviathan: quite forgetting that the vessel you are on board of is its very counterpart.

There is always a clerk's office on the lower deck, where you pay your fare; a ladies' cabin; baggage and stowage rooms; engineer's room; and in short a great variety of perplexities which render the discovery of the gentlemen's cabin a matter of some difficulty. It often occupies the whole length of the boat (as it did in this case), and has three or four tiers of berths on each side. When I first descended into the cabin of the New York, it looked, in my unaccustomed eyes, about as long as the Burlington Arcade.

The Sound which has to be crossed on this passage is not always a very safe or pleasant navigation, and has been the scene of some unfortunate accidents. It was a wet morning, and very misty, and we soon lost sight of land. The day was calm, however, and brightened towards noon. After exhausting (with good help from a friend) the larder, and the stock of bottled beer, I lay down to sleep, being very much tired with the fatigues of yesterday. But I awoke from my nap in time to hurry up, and see Hell Gate, the Hog's Back, the Frying Pan, and other notorious localities, attractive to all readers of famous Diedrich Knickerbocker's History. We were now in a narrow channel, with sloping banks on either side, besprinkled with pleasant villas, and made refreshing to the sight by turf and trees. Soon we shot in quick succession past a light-

house; a madhouse (how the lunatics flung up their caps and roared in sympathy with the headlong engine and the driving tide!); a jail; and other buildings; and so emerged into a noble bay, whose waters sparkled in the now cloudless sunshine like Nature's eyes turned up to Heaven.

Then there lay stretched out before us, to the right, confused heaps of buildings, with here and there a spire or steeple, looking down upon the herd below; and here and there, again, a cloud of lazy smoke; and in the foreground a forest of ships' masts, cheery with flapping sails and waving flags. Crossing from among them to the opposite shore were steam ferry-boats laden with people, coaches, horses, wagons, baskets, boxes: crossed and recrossed by other ferry-boats, all travelling to and fro, and never idle. Stately among these restless Insects were two or three large ships, moving with slow majestic pace, as creatures of a prouder kind, disdainful of their puny journeys, and making for the broad sea. Beyond were shining heights, and islands in the glancing river, and a distance scarcely less blue and bright than the sky it seemed to meet. The city's hum and buzz, the clinking of capstans, the ringing of bells, the barking of dogs, the clattering of wheels, tingled in the listening ear. All of which life and stir, coming across the stirring water, caught new life and animation from its free companionship; and, sympathising with its buoyant spirits, glistened as it seemed in sport upon its surface, and hemmed the vessel round, and plashed the water high about her sides, and, floating her gallantly into the dock, flew off again to welcome other comers, and speed before them to the busy port.

CHAPTER VI

NEW YORK.

THE beautiful metropolis of America is by no means so clean a city as Boston, but many of its streets have the same characteristics; except that the houses are not quite so fresh-coloured, the sign-boards are not quite so gaudy, the gilded letters not quite so golden, the bricks not quite so red, the stone not quite so white, the blinds and area railings not quite so green, the knobs and plates upon the street doors not quite so bright and twinkling. There are many bye-streets, almost as neutral in clean colours, and positive in dirty ones, as bye-streets in London; and there is one quarter, commonly called the Five Points, which, in respect of filth and wretchedness, may be safely backed against Seven Dials, or any other part of famed St. Giles's.

The great promenade and thoroughfare, as most people know, is Broadway; a wide and bustling street, which, from the Battery Gardens to its opposite termination in a country road, may be four miles long. Shall we sit down in an upper floor of the Carlton House Hotel (situated in the best part of this main artery of New York), and, when we are tired of looking down upon the life below, sally forth arm in arm and mingle with the stream?

Warm weather! The sun strikes upon our heads at this open window, as though its rays were concentrated through a burning-glass; but the day is in its zenith, and the season an unusual one. Was there ever such a sunny street as this Broadway! The pavement stones are polished with the tread of feet until they shine again; the red bricks of the houses might be yet in the dry, hot kilns; and the roofs of those omnibuses look as though, if water were poured on them, they would hiss and smoke, and smell like half-quenched fires. No stint of omnibuses here! Half a dozen have gone by within as many minutes. Plenty of hackney cabs and coaches, too; gigs,

phaetons, large-wheeled tilburies, and private carriages rather of a clumsy make, and not very different from the vehicles, but built for the heavy roads before the pavement. Negro coachmen and white, in straw hats, hats, white hats, glazed caps, fur caps; in coats of brown, green, blue, nankeen, striped jean and there, in that one instance (look while it passes too late), in suits of livery. Some Southern who puts his blacks in uniform, and swells and power. Yonder, where that phaeton with pair of greys has stopped — standing at their Yorkshire groom, who has not been very long and looks sorrowfully round for a companion which he may traverse the city half a year Heaven save the ladies, how they dress! colours in these ten minutes than we should where in as many days. What various bow silks and satins! what pinking of pinching of thin shoes, and fluttering of sels, and display of rich cloaks with gaudy The young gentlemen are fond, you see, of shirt-collars and cultivating their whiskers, the chin; but they cannot approach the ladies bearing, being, to say the truth, humanity of sort. Byrons of the desk and counter, what kind of men those are behind you: holiday clothes, of whom one carries in his scrap of paper from which he tries to spell while the other looks about for it on all the dows.

Irishmen both! You might know them, masked, by their long-tailed blue coats their drab trousers, which they wear like working dresses, who are easy in no others. and countrywomen of these two labourers. would dig, and delve, and dredge, and make canals and roads, and execute great Improvement! Irishmen both, and surely out what they seek. Let us go down and love of home, and that spirit of liberty which admits of

service to honest men, and honest work for honest bread, no matter what it be.

That's well! We have got at the right address at last, though it is written in strange characters truly, and might have been scrawled with the blunt handle of the spade the writer better knows the use of than a pen. Their way lies yonder, but what business takes them there? They carry savings: to hoard up? No. They are brothers, those men. One crossed the sea alone, and working very hard for one half year, and living harder, saved funds enough to bring the other out. That done, they worked together side by side, contentedly sharing hard labour and hard living for another term, and then their sisters came, and then another brother, and lastly, their old mother. And what now? Why, the poor old crone is restless in a strange land, and yearns to lay her bones, she says, among her people in the old graveyard at home: and so they go to pay her passage back: and God help her and them, and every simple heart, and all who turn to the Jerusalem of their younger days, and have an altar fire upon the cold hearth of their fathers.

This narrow thoroughfare, baking and blistering in the sun, is Wall Street: the Stock Exchange and Lombard Street of New York. Many a rapid fortune has been made in this street, and many a no less rapid ruin. Some of these very merchants whom you see hanging about here now have locked up money in their strong boxes, like the man in the Arabian Nights, and, opening them again, have found but withered leaves. Below, here by the water-side, where the bowsprits of ships stretch across the footway, and almost thrust themselves into the windows, lie the noble American vessels which have made their packet service the finest in the world. They have brought hither the foreigners who abound in all the streets: not perhaps, that there are more here than in other commercial cities, but elsewhere, they have particular haunts, and you must find them out; here, they pervade the town.

We must cross Broadway again; gaining some refreshment from the heat, in the sight of the great blocks of clean ice which are being carried into shops and bar-rooms; and the pineapples and watermelons profusely displayed for sale. Fine streets of spacious houses here, you see! — Wall Street has furnished and dismantled many of them very often — and here a

deep green leafy square. Be sure that is a hospitable house with inmates to be affectionately remembered always, where they have the open door and pretty show of plants within, and where the child with laughing eyes is peeping out of window at the little dog below. You wonder what may be the use of this tall flagstaff in the bye-street, with something like Liberty's head-dress on its top: so do I. But there is a passion for tall flagstaffs hereabout, and you may see its twin brother in five minutes, if you have a mind.

Again across Broadway, and so — passing from the many coloured crowd and glittering shops — into another long main street, the Bowery. A railroad yonder, see, where two stout horses trot along, drawing a score or two of people and a great wooden ark, with ease. The stores are poorer here; the passengers less gay. Clothes ready made, and meat ready cooked, are to be bought in these parts; and the lively whirl of carriages is exchanged for the deep rumble of carts and wagons. These signs which are so plentiful, in shape like river buoys, or small balloons, hoisted by cords to poles, and dangling there, announce, as you may see by looking up, "OYSTERS IN EVERY STYLE." They tempt the hungry most at night, for then dull candles, glimmering inside, illuminate these dainty words, and make the mouths of idlers water, as they read and linger.

What is this dismal fronted pile of bastard Egyptian, like an enchanter's palace in a melodrama! — a famous prison, called The Tombs. Shall we go in?

So. A long narrow lofty building, stove-heated as usual, with four galleries, one above the other, going round it, and communicating by stairs. Between the two sides of each gallery, and in its centre, a bridge, for the greater convenience of crossing. On each of these bridges sits a man, dozing or reading, or talking to an idle companion. On each tier are two opposite rows of small iron doors. They look like furnace doors, but are cold and black, as though the fires within had all gone out. Some two or three are open, and women, with drooping heads bent down, are talking to the inmates. The whole is lighted by a skylight, but it is fast closed; and from the roof there dangle, limp and drooping, two useless windsails.

A man with keys appears, to show us round. A good-looking fellow, and, in his way, civil and obliging.

"Are those black doors the cells?"

"Yes."

"Are they all full?"

"Well, they 're pretty nigh full, and that 's a fact, and no two ways about it."

"Those at the bottom are unwholesome, surely!"

"Why, we *do* only put coloured people in 'em; that 's the truth."

"When do the prisoners take exercise?"

"Well, they do without it pretty much."

"Do they never walk in the yard?"

"Considerable seldom."

"Sometimes, I suppose?"

"Well, it 's rare they do. They keep pretty bright without it."

"But suppose a man were here for a twelvemonth. I know this is only a prison for criminals who are charged with grave offences, while they are awaiting their trial, or are under remand, but the law, here, affords criminals many means of delay. What with motions for new trial, and in arrest of judgment, and what not, a prisoner might be here for twelve months, I take it, might he not?"

"Well, I guess he might."

"Do you mean to say that in all that time he would never come out at that little iron door, for exercise?"

"He might walk some, perhaps — not much."

"Will you open one of the doors?"

"All, if you like."

The fastenings jar and rattle, and one of the doors turns slowly on its hinges. Let us look in. A small bare cell, into which the light enters through a high chink in the wall. There is a rude means of washing, a table, and a bedstead. Upon the latter sits a man of sixty, reading. He looks up for a moment; gives an impatient dogged shake; and fixes his eyes upon his book again. As we withdrew our heads, the door closes on him, and is fastened as before. This man has murdered his wife, and will probably be hanged.

"How long has he been here?"

"A month."

"When will he be tried?"

"Next term."

"When is that?"

"Next month."

"In England, if a man be under sentence of death, even he has air and exercise at certain periods of the day."

"Possible?"

With what stupendous and untranslatable coolness he says this, and how loungingly he leads on to the women's side: making, as he goes, a kind of iron castanet of the key and the stair-rail!

Each cell door on this side has a square aperture in it. Some of the women peep anxiously through it at the sound of footsteps; others shrink away in shame.—For what offence can that lonely child, of ten or twelve years old, be shut up here? Oh! that boy? He is the son of the prisoner we saw just now; is a witness against his father; and is detained here for safe-keeping, until the trial; that's all.

But it is a dreadful place for the child to pass the long days and nights in. This is rather hard treatment for a young witness, is it not?—What says our conductor?

"Well, it an't a very rowdy life, and *that's* a fact!"

Again he clinks his metal castanet, and leads us leisurely away. I have a question to ask him as we go.

"Pray, why do they call this place The Tombs?"

"Well, it's the cant name."

"I know it is. Why?"

"Some suicides happened here, when it was first built. I expect it come about from that."

"I saw just now, that that man's clothes were scattered about the floor of his cell. Don't you oblige the prisoners to be orderly, and put such things away?"

"Where should they put 'em?"

"Not on the ground surely. What do you say to hanging them up?"

He stops and looks round to emphasise his answer:—

"Why, I say that's just it. When they had hooks they would hang themselves, so they're taken out of every cell, and there's only the marks left where they used to be!"

The prison-yard in which he pauses now, has been the scene of terrible performances. Into this narrow, grave-like place, men are brought out to die. The wretched creature stands beneath the gibbet on the ground, the rope about his

and when the sign is given, a weight at its other end comes running down, and swings him up into the air — a corpse.

The law requires that there be present at this dismal spectacle, the judge, the jury, and citizens to the amount of twenty-five. From the community it is hidden. To the dissolute and bad, the thing remains a frightful mystery. Between the criminal and them the prison wall is interposed as a thick gloomy veil. It is the curtain to his bed of death, his winding sheet, and grave. From him it shuts out life, and all the motives to unrepenting hardihood in that last hour, which its mere sight and presence is often all-sufficient to sustain. There are no bold eyes to make him bold; no ruffians to uphold a ruffian's name before. All beyond the pitiless stone wall is unknown space.

Let us go forth again into the cheerful streets.

Once more in Broadway! Here are the same ladies in bright colours, walking to and fro, in pairs and singly; yonder the very same light blue parasol which passed and repassed the hotel window twenty times while we were sitting there. We are going to cross here. Take care of the pigs. Two portly sows are trotting up behind this carriage, and a select party of half a dozen gentlemen hogs have just now turned the corner.

Here is a solitary swine lounging homeward by himself. He has only one ear; having parted with the other to vagrant dogs in the course of his city rambles. But he gets on very well without it; and leads a roving, gentlemanly, vagabond kind of life, somewhat answering to that of our club men at home. He leaves his lodgings every morning at a certain hour, throws himself upon the town, gets through his day in some manner quite satisfactory to himself, and regularly appears at the door of his own house again at night, like the mysterious master of Gil Blas. He is a free and easy, careless, indifferent kind of pig, having a very large acquaintance among other pigs of the same character, whom he rather knows by sight than conversation, as he seldom troubles himself to stop and exchange civilities, but goes grunting down the kennel, turning up the news and small talk of the city in the shape of cabbage-stalks and offal, and bearing no tails but his own; which is a very short one, for his old enemies, the dogs, have been at that, too, and have left him hardly enough to swear by. He is in every respect a republican pig going wher-

ever he pleases, and mingling with the best society, on an equal, if not superior footing, for every one makes way when he appears, and the haughtiest give him the wall, if he prefer it. He is a great philosopher, and seldom moved, unless by the dogs before mentioned. Sometimes, indeed, you may see his small eye twinkling on a slaughtered friend, whose carcase garnishes a butcher's door-post, but he grunts out "Such is life: all flesh is pork!" buries his nose in the mire again, and waddles down the gutter; comforting himself with the reflection that there is one snout the less to anticipate stray cabbage-stalks, at any rate.

They are the city scavengers, these pigs. Ugly brutes they are; having, for the most part, scanty, brown backs, like the lids of old horse-hair trunks, spotted with unwholesome black blotches. They have long, gaunt legs, too, and such peaked snouts that, if one of them could be persuaded to sit for his profile, nobody would recognise it for a pig's likeness. They are never attended upon, or fed, or driven, or caught, but are thrown upon their own resources in early life, and become preternaturally knowing in consequence. Every pig knows where he lives, much better than anybody could tell him. At this hour, just as evening is closing in, you will see them roaming towards bed by scores, eating their way to the last. Occasionally, some youth among them who has over-eaten himself, or has been much worried by dogs, trots shrinkingly homeward, like a prodigal son; but this is a rare case, perfect self-possession and self-reliance, and immovable composure, being their foremost attributes.

The streets and shops are lighted now, and as the eye travels down the long thoroughfare, dotted with bright jets of gas, it is reminded of Oxford Street or Piccadilly. Here and there a flight of broad stone cellar steps appears, and a painted lamp directs you to the Bowling Saloon, or Ten-Pin Alley; Ten-Pins being a game of mingled chance and skill, invented when the Legislature passed an act forbidding Nine-Pins. At other downward flights of steps are other lamps, marking the whereabouts of oyster cellars — pleasant retreats, say I; not only by reason of their wonderful cookery of oysters, pretty nigh as large as cheese-plates, (or for thy dear sake, heartiest of Greek Professors!) but because, of all kinds of eaters of fish, or flesh, or fowl, in these latitudes, the swallowers of oysters alone are not gre-

various; but subduing themselves, as it were, to the nature of what they work in, and copying the coyness of the thing they eat, do sit apart in curtained boxes, and consort by twos, not by two hundreds.

But how quiet the streets are! Are there no itinerant bands; no wind or stringed instruments? No, not one. By day, are there no Punches, Fantoccini, Dancing-dogs, Jugglers, Conjurors, Orchestrinas, or even Barrel-organs? No, not one. Yes, I remember one. One barrel-organ and a dancing-monkey — sportive by nature, but fast fading into a dull, lumpish monkey, of the Utilitarian school. Beyond that, nothing lively; no, not so much as a white mouse in a twirling cage.

Are there no amusements? Yes, there is a lecture-room across the way, from which that glare of light proceeds, and there may be evening service for the ladies thrice a week, or oftener. For the young gentlemen, there is the counting-house, the store, the bar-room: the latter, as you may see through these windows, pretty full. Hark! to the clinking sound of hammers breaking lumps of ice, and to the cool gurgling of the pounded bits, as, in the process of mixing, they are poured from glass to glass! No amusements? What are these suckers of cigars and swallowers of strong drinks, whose hats and legs we see in every possible variety of twist, doing, but amusing themselves? What are the fifty newspapers, which those precocious urchins are bawling down the street, and which are kept filed within, what are they but amusements? Not vapid waterish amusements, but good strong stuff; dealing in round abuse and blackguard names; pulling off the roofs of private houses, as the Halting Devil did in Spain; pimping and pandering for all degrees of vicious taste, and gorging with coined lies the most voracious maw; imputing to every man in public life the coarsest and the vilest motives; scaring away from the stabbed and prostrate body politic, every Samaritan of clear conscience and good deeds; and setting on, with yell and whistle, and the clapping of foul hands, the vilest vermin and worst birds of prey. — No amusements!

Let us go on again; and passing this wilderness of an hotel with stores about its base, like some Continental theatre, or the London Opera House shorn of its colonnade, plunge into the Five Points. But it is needful, first, that we take as our escort these two heads of the police, whom you would know for sharp

and well-trained officers if you met them in the Great Desert; so true it is that certain pursuits, wherever carried on, will stamp men with the same character. These two might have been begotten, born, and bred, in Bow Street.

We have seen no beggars in the streets by night or day; but of other kinds of strollers, plenty. Poverty, wretchedness, and vice are rife enough where we are going now.

This is the place, these narrow ways, diverging to the right and left, and reeking everywhere with dirt and filth. Such lives as are led here bear the same fruits here as elsewhere. The coarse and bloated faces at the doors have counterparts at home, and all the wide world over. Debauchery has made the very houses prematurely old. See how the rotten beams are tumbling down, and how the patched and broken windows seem to scowl dimly, like eyes that have been hurt in drunken frays. Many of those pigs live here. Do they ever wonder why their masters walk upright in lieu of going on all fours? and why they talk instead of grunting?

So far, nearly every house is a low tavern; and on the bar-room walls are coloured prints of Washington, and Queen Victoria of England, and the American Eagle. Among the pigeon-holes that hold the bottles are pieces of plate-glass and coloured paper, for there is, in some sort, a taste for decoration, even here. And as seamen frequent these haunts, there are maritime pictures by the dozen: of partings between sailors and their lady-loves, portraits of William of the ballad, and his Black-eyed Susan; of Will Watch, the Bold Smuggler; of Paul Jones the Pirate, and the like: on which the painted eyes of Queen Victoria, and of Washington to boot, rest in as strange companionship as on most of the scenes that are enacted in their wondering presence.

What place is this to which the squalid street conducts us? A kind of square of leprous houses, some of which are attainable only by crazy wooden stairs without. What lies beyond this tottering flight of steps, that creak beneath our tread!—a miserable room, lighted by one dim candle, and destitute of all comfort, save that which may be hidden in a wretched bed. Beside it sits a man; his elbows on his knees; his forehead hidden in his hands. "What ails that man?" asks the foremost officer. "Fever," he sullenly replies, without looking up. Conceive the fancies of a fevered brain, in such a place as this!

Ascend these pitch-dark stairs, heedful of a false footing on the trembling boards, and grope your way with me into this wolfish den, where neither ray of light nor breath of air appears to come. A negro lad, startled from his sleep by the officer's voice — he knows it well — but comforted by his assurance that he has not come on business, officiously bestirs himself to light a candle. The match flickers for a moment, and shows great mounds of dusky rags upon the ground; then dies away and leaves a denser darkness than before, if there can be degrees in such extremes. He stumbles down the stairs and presently comes back, shading a flaring taper with his hand. Then the mounds of rags are seen to be astir, and rise slowly up, and the floor is covered with heaps of negro women, waking from their sleep; their white teeth chattering, and their bright eyes glistening and winking on all sides with surprise and fear, like the countless repetition of one astonished African face in some strange mirror.

Mount up these other stairs with no less caution (there are traps and pitfalls here for those who are not so well escorted as ourselves) into the house-top; where the bare beams and rafters meet overhead, and calm night looks down through the crevices in the roof. Open the door of one of these cramped hutches full of sleeping negroes. Pah! They have a charcoal fire within; there is a smell of singeing clothes, or flesh, so close they gather round the brazier; and vapours issue forth that blind and suffocate. From every corner, as you glance about you in these dark retreats, some figure crawls half awakened, as if the judgment hour were near at hand, and every obscene grave were giving up its dead. Where dogs would howl to lie, women, and men, and boys slink off to sleep, forcing the dislodged rats to move away in quest of better lodgings.

Here, too, are lanes and alleys, paved with mud knee-deep, underground chambers, where they dance and game; the walls bedecked with rough designs of ships, and forts, and flags, and American Eagles out of number; ruined houses, open to the street, whence, through wide gaps in the walls, other ruins loom upon the eye, as though the world of vice and misery had nothing else to show; hideous tenements which take their name from robbery and murder: all that is loathsome, drooping, and decayed is here.

Our leader has his hand upon the latch of "Almack's," and calls to us from the bottom of the steps; for the assembly-room of the Five-Point fashionables is approached by a descent. Shall we go in? It is but a moment.

Heyday! the landlady of Almack's thrives! A buxom fat mulatto woman, with sparkling eyes, whose head is daintily ornamented with a handkerchief of many colours. Nor is the landlord much behind her in his finery, being attired in a smart blue jacket, like a ship's steward, with a thick gold ring upon his little finger, and round his neck a gleaming golden watch-guard. How glad he is to see us! What will we please to call for? A dance? It shall be done directly, sir: "a regular breakdown."

The corpulent black fiddler, and his friend who plays the tambourine, stamp upon the boarding of the small raised orchestra in which they sit, and play a lively measure. Five or six couple come upon the floor, marshalled by a lively young negro, who is the wit of the assembly, and the greatest dancer known. He never leaves off making queer faces, and is the delight of all the rest, who grin from ear to ear incessantly. Among the dancers are two young mulatto girls, with large, black, drooping eyes, and head-gear after the fashion of the hostess, who are as shy, or feign to be, as though they never danced before, and so look down before the visitors that their partners can see nothing but the long fringed lashes.

But the dance commences. Every gentleman sets as long as he likes to the opposite lady, and the opposite lady to him, and all are so long about it that the sport begins to languish, when suddenly the lively hero dashes in to the rescue. Instantly the fiddler grins, and goes at it tooth and nail; there is new energy in the tambourine; new laughter in the dancers; new smiles in the landlady; new confidence in the landlord; new brightness in the very candles. Single shuffle, double shuffle, cut and cross-cut; snapping his fingers, rolling his eyes, turning in his knees, presenting the backs of his legs in front, spinning about on his toes and heels like nothing but the man's fingers on the tambourine; dancing with two left legs, two right legs, two wooden legs, two wire legs, two spring legs — all sorts of legs and no legs — what is this to him? And in what walk of life, or dance of life, does man ever get such stimulating applause as thunders about him, when, having

danced his partner off her feet, and himself, too, he finishes by capering gloriously on the bar-counter, and calling for something to drink, with the chuckle of a million of counterfeit Jim Crows, in one inimitable sound!

The air, even in these distempered parts, is fresh after the stifling atmosphere of the houses; and now, as we emerge into a broader street, it blows upon us with a purer breath, and the stars look bright again. Here are The Tombs once more. The city watch-house is a part of the building. It follows naturally on the sights we have just left. Let us see that, and then to bed.

What! do you thrust your common offenders against the police discipline of the town into such holes as these? Do men and women, against whom no crime is proved, lie here all night in perfect darkness, surrounded by the noisome vapours which encircle that flagging lamp you light us with, and breathing this filthy and offensive stench! Why, such indecent and disgusting dungeons as these cells would bring disgrace upon the most despotic empire in the world! Look at them, man — you, who see them every night, and keep the keys! Do you see what they are? Do you know how drains are made below the streets, and wherein these human sewers differ, except in being always stagnant?

Well, he don't know. He has had five and twenty young women locked up in this very cell at one time, and you 'd hardly realise what handsome faces there were among 'em.

In God's name! shut the door upon the wretched creature who is in it now, and put its screen before a place quite unsurpassed in all the vice, neglect, and deviltry of the worst old town in Europe.

Are people really left all night, untried, in those black sties? — Every night. The watch is set at seven in the evening. The magistrate opens his court at five in the morning. That is the earliest hour at which the first prisoner can be released; and if an officer appear against him, he is not taken out till nine o'clock or ten. — But if any one among them die in the interval, as one man did, not long ago? Then he is half eaten by the rats in an hour's time — as that man was — and there an end.

What is this intolerable tolling of great bells, and crashing of wheels, and shouting in the distance? A fire. And what

that deep red light in the opposite direction? Another fire. And what these charred and blackened walls we stand before! A dwelling where a fire has been. It was more than hinted, in an official report, not long ago, that some of these conflagrations were not wholly accidental, and that speculation and enterprise found a field of exertion, even in flames. But be this as it may, there was a fire last night, there are two to-night, and you may lay an even wager there will be at least one to-morrow. So, carrying that with us for our comfort, let us say, Good night, and climb up stairs to bed.

One day, during my stay in New York, I paid a visit to the different public institutions on Long Island, or Rhode Island: I forget which. One of them is a Lunatic Asylum. The building is handsome; and is remarkable for a spacious and elegant staircase. The whole structure is not yet finished, but it is already one of considerable size and extent, and is capable of accommodating a very large number of patients.

I cannot say that I derived much comfort from the inspection of this charity. The different wards might have been cleaner and better ordered; I saw nothing of that salutary system which had impressed me so favourably elsewhere; and everything had a lounging, listless, madhouse air, which was very painful. The moping idiot, cowering down with long dishevelled hair; the gibbering maniac, with his hideous laugh and pointed finger; the vacant eye, the fierce wild face, the gloomy picking of the hands and lips, and munching of the nails: there they were all, without disguise, in naked ugliness and horror. In the dining-room, a bare, dull, dreary place, with nothing for the eye to rest on but the empty walls, a woman was locked up alone. She was bent, they told me, on committing suicide. If anything could have strengthened her in her resolution, it would certainly have been the insupportable monotony of such an existence.

The terrible crowd with which these halls and galleries were filled so shocked me that I abridged my stay within the shortest limits, and declined to see that portion of the building in which the refractory and violent were under closer restraint. I have no doubt that the gentleman who presided over this establishment at the time I write of was competent to manage it, and had done all in his power to promote its usefulness;

[illegible]t will it be believed that the miserable strife of Party feeling [illegible] carried even into this sad refuge of afflicted and degraded [illegible]manity? Will it be believed that the eyes which are to [illegible]atch over and control the wanderings of minds on which the [illegible]st dreadful visitation to which our nature is exposed has [illegible]llen must wear the glasses of some wretched side in Politics? Will it be believed that the governor of such a house as this [illegible] appointed, and deposed, and changed perpetually, as Parties [illegible]ctuate and vary, and as their despicable weathercocks are [illegible]own this way or that? A hundred times in every week, [illegible]me new most paltry exhibition of that narrow-minded and [illegible]jurious Party Spirit, which is the Simoom of America, sickening and blighting everything of wholesome life within its reach, was forced upon my notice; but I never turned my back upon it with feelings of such deep disgust and measureless contempt as when I crossed the threshold of this madhouse.

At a short distance from this building is another called the Alms House, that is to say, the workhouse of New York. This is a large institution also; lodging, I believe, when I was there, nearly a thousand poor. It was badly ventilated, and badly lighted; was not too clean; and impressed me, on the whole, very uncomfortably. But it must be remembered that New York, as a great emporium of commerce, and as a place of general resort, not only from all parts of the States, but from most parts of the world, has always a large pauper population to provide for; and labours, therefore, under peculiar difficulties in this respect. Nor must it be forgotten that New York is a large town, and that in all large towns a vast amount of good and evil is intermixed and jumbled up together.

In the same neighbourhood is the Farm, where young orphans are nursed and bred. I did not see it, but I believe it is well conducted; and I can the more easily credit it, from knowing how mindful they usually are, in America, of that beautiful passage in the Litany which remembers all sick persons and young children.

I was taken to these institutions by water, in a boat belonging to the Island Jail, and rowed by a crew of prisoners, who were dressed in a striped uniform of black and buff, in which they looked like faded tigers. They took me, by the same conveyance, to the Jail itself.

It is an old prison, and quite a pioneer establishment, on

the plan I have already described. I was glad to hear this, for it is unquestionably a very indifferent one. The most is made, however, of the means it possesses, and it is as well regulated as such a place can be.

The women worked in covered sheds erected for that purpose. If I remember right, there are no shops for the men, but, be that as it may, the greater part of them labour in certain stone-quarries near at hand. The day being very wet, indeed, this labour was suspended, and the prisoners were in their cells. Imagine these cells, some two or three hundred in number, and in every one a man locked up: this one at his door for air, with his hands thrust through the grate; this one in bed (in the middle of the day, remember); and this one flung down in a heap upon the ground, with his head against the bars, like a wild beast. Make the rain pour down, outside, in torrents. Put the everlasting stove in the midst; hot, and suffocating, and vaporous as a witch's cauldron. Add a collection of gentle odours, such as would arise from a thousand mildewed umbrellas, wet through, and a thousand buck-baskets, full of half-washed linen — and there is the prison, as it was that day.

The prison for the State at Sing Sing is, on the other hand, a model jail. That, and Auburn, are, I believe, the largest and best examples of the silent system.

In another part of the city is the Refuge for the Destitute: an institution whose object is to reclaim youthful offenders, male and female, black and white, without distinction; to teach them useful trades, apprentice them to respectable masters, and make them worthy members of society. Its design, it will be seen, is similar to that at Boston; and it is a no less meritorious and admirable establishment. A suspicion crossed my mind during my inspection of this noble charity, whether the superintendent had quite sufficient knowledge of the world and worldly characters; and whether he did not commit a great mistake in treating some young girls, who were to all intents and purposes, by their years and their past lives, women, as though they were little children; which certainly had a ludicrous effect in my eyes, and, or I am much mistaken, in theirs also. As the Institution, however, is always under the vigilant examination of a body of gentlemen of great intelligence and experience, it cannot fail to be well conducted; and

whether I am right or wrong in this slight particular is unimportant to its deserts and character, which it would be difficult to estimate too highly.

In addition to these establishments, there are in New York excellent hospitals and schools, literary institutions and libraries; an admirable fire department (as, indeed, it should be, having constant practice), and charities of every sort and kind. In the suburbs there is a spacious cemetery; unfinished yet, but every day improving. The saddest tomb I saw there was "The Strangers' Grave. Dedicated to the different hotels in this city."

There are three principal theatres. Two of them, the Park and the Bowery, are large, elegant, and handsome buildings, and are, I grieve to write it, generally deserted. The third, the Olympic, is a tiny show-box for vaudevilles and burlesques. It is singularly well conducted by Mr. Mitchell, a comic actor of great quiet humour and originality, who is well remembered and esteemed by London play-goers. I am happy to report of this deserving gentleman that his benches are usually well filled, and that his theatre rings with merriment every night. I had almost forgotten a small summer theatre, called Niblo's, with gardens and open air amusements attached; but I believe it is not exempt from the general depression under which Theatrical Property, or what is humorously called by that name, unfortunately labours.

The country round New York is surpassingly and exquisitely picturesque. The climate, as I have already intimated, is somewhat of the warmest. What it would be, without the sea breezes which come from its beautiful bay in the evening time, I will not throw myself or my readers into a fever by inquiring.

The tone of the best society in this city is like that of Boston; here and there, it may be, with a greater infusion of the mercantile spirit, but generally polished and refined, and always most hospitable. The houses and tables are elegant; the hours later and more rakish; and there is, perhaps, a greater spirit of contention in reference to appearances, and the display of wealth and costly living. The ladies are singularly beautiful.

Before I left New York I made arrangements for securing a passage home in the George Washington packet ship, which

was advertised to sail in June; that being the month in which I had determined, if prevented by no accident in the course of my ramblings, to leave America.

I never thought that going back to England, returning to all who are dear to me, and to pursuits that have insensibly grown to be part of my nature, I could have felt so much sorrow as I endured, when I parted at last, on board this ship, with the friends who had accompanied me from this city. I never thought the name of any place, so far away, and so lately known, could ever associate itself in my mind with the crowd of affectionate remembrances that now cluster about it. There are those in this city who would brighten, to me, the darkest winter day that ever glimmered and went out in Lapland; and before whose presence even Home grew dim, when they and I exchanged that painful word which mingles with our every thought and deed; which haunts our cradle-heads in infancy, and closes up the vista of our lives in age.

CHAPTER VII

PHILADELPHIA AND ITS SOLITARY PRISON.

THE journey from New York to Philadelphia is made by railroad, and two ferries; and usually occupies between five and six hours. It was a fine evening when we were passengers in the train; and watching the bright sunset from a little window near the door by which we sat, my attention was attracted to a remarkable appearance issuing from the windows of the gentlemen's car immediately in front of us, which I supposed for some time was occasioned by a number of industrious persons inside, ripping open feather-beds, and giving the feathers to the wind. At length it occurred to me that they were only spitting, which was indeed the case; though how any number of passengers which it was possible for that car to contain could have maintained such a playful and incessant shower of expectoration, I am still at a loss to understand, notwithstanding the experience in all salivatory phenomena which I afterwards acquired.

I made acquaintance, on this journey, with a mild and modest young Quaker, who opened the discourse by informing me, in a grave whisper, that his grandfather was the inventor of cold-drawn castor-oil. I mention the circumstance here, thinking it probable that this is the first occasion on which the valuable medicine in question was ever used as a conversational aperient.

We reached the city late that night. Looking out of my chamber window, before going to bed, I saw, on the opposite side of the way, a handsome building of white marble, which had a mournful, ghostlike aspect, dreary to behold. I attributed this to the sombre influence of the night, and on rising in the morning looked out again, expecting to see its steps and portico thronged with groups of people passing in and out. The door was still tight shut, however; the same cold cheerless air prevailed; and the building looked as if the marble statue

of Don Guzman could alone have any business to transact within its gloomy walls. I hastened to inquire its name and purpose, and then my surprise vanished. It was the Tomb of many fortunes; the Great Catacomb of investment; the memorable United States Bank.

The stoppage of this bank, with all its ruinous consequences, had cast (as I was told on every side) a gloom on Philadelphia, under the depressing effect of which it yet laboured. It certainly did seem rather dull and out of spirits.

It is a handsome city, but distractingly regular. After walking about it for an hour or two, I felt that I would have given the world for a crooked street. The collar of my coat appeared to stiffen, and the brim of my hat to expand, beneath its Quakerly influence. My hair shrunk into a sleek short crop, my hands folded themselves upon my breast of their own calm accord, and thoughts of taking lodgings in Mark Lane over against the Market Place, and of making a large fortune by speculations in corn came over me involuntarily.

Philadelphia is most bountifully provided with fresh water, which is showered and jerked about, and turned on, and poured off, everywhere. The waterworks, which are on a height near the city, are no less ornamental than useful, being tastefully laid out as a public garden, and kept in the best and neatest order. The river is dammed at this point, and forced by its own power into certain high tanks or reservoirs, whence the whole city, to the top stories of the houses, is supplied at a very trifling expense.

There are various public institutions. Among them a most excellent Hospital — a Quaker establishment, but not sectarian in the great benefits it confers; a quiet, quaint old Library, named after Franklin; a handsome Exchange and Post Office; and so forth. In connection with the Quaker Hospital, there is a picture by West, which is exhibited for the benefit of the funds of the institution. The subject is, our Saviour healing the sick, and it is, perhaps, as favourable a specimen of the Master as can be seen anywhere. Whether this be high or low praise depends upon the reader's taste.

In the same room, there is a very characteristic and lifelike portrait by Mr. Sully, a distinguished American artist.

My stay in Philadelphia was very short, but what I saw of its society I greatly liked. Treating of its general characteris-

ties, I should be disposed to say that it is more provincial than Boston or New York, and that there is afloat in the fair city an assumption of taste and criticism, savouring rather of those genteel discussions upon the same themes, in connection with Shakespeare and the Musical Glasses, of which we read in the Vicar of Wakefield. Near the city is a most splendid unfinished marble structure for the Girard College, founded by a deceased gentleman of that name and of enormous wealth, which, if completed according to the original design, will be perhaps the richest edifice of modern times. But the bequest is involved in legal disputes, and pending them the work has stopped; so that like many other great undertakings in America, even this is rather going to be done one of these days than doing now.

In the outskirts stands a great prison, called the Eastern Penitentiary, conducted on a plan peculiar to the State of Pennsylvania. The system here is rigid, strict, and hopeless solitary confinement. I believe it, in its effects, to be cruel and wrong.

In its intention, I am well convinced that it is kind, humane, and meant for reformation; but I am persuaded that those who devised this system of prison discipline, and those benevolent gentlemen who carry it into execution, do not know what it is that they are doing. I believe that very few men are capable of estimating the immense amount of torture and agony which this dreadful punishment, prolonged for years, inflicts upon the sufferers; and in guessing at it myself, and in reasoning from what I have seen written upon their faces, and what to my certain knowledge they feel within, I am only the more convinced that there is a depth of terrible endurance in it which none but the sufferers themselves can fathom, and which no man has a right to inflict upon his fellow-creature. I hold this slow and daily tampering with the mysteries of the brain to be immeasurably worse than any torture of the body; and because its ghastly signs and tokens are not so palpable to the eye and sense of touch as scars upon the flesh; because its wounds are not upon the surface, and it extorts few cries that human ears can hear, therefore I the more denounce it, as a secret punishment which slumbering humanity is not roused up to stay. I hesitated once, debating with myself, whether, if I had the power of saying "Yes" or "No," I would allow it to be tried

in certain cases, where the terms of imprisonment were short; but now, I solemnly declare that with no rewards or honours could I walk a happy man beneath the open sky by day, or lay me down upon my bed at night, with the consciousness that one human creature, for any length of time, no matter what, lay suffering this unknown punishment in his silent cell, and I the cause, or I consenting to it in the least degree.

I was accompanied to this prison by two gentlemen, officially connected with its management, and passed the day in going from cell to cell, and talking with the inmates. Every facility was afforded me that the utmost courtesy could suggest. Nothing was concealed or hidden from my view, and every piece of information that I sought was openly and frankly given. The perfect order of the building cannot be praised too highly, and of the excellent motives of all who are immediately concerned in the administration of the system, there can be no kind of question.

Between the body of the prison and the outer wall, there is a spacious garden. Entering it, by a wicket in the massive gate, we pursued the path before us to its other termination, and passed into a large chamber, from which seven long passages radiate. On either side of each is a long, long row of low cell doors, with a certain number over every one. Above, a gallery of cells like those below, except that they have no narrow yard attached (as those in the ground tier have), and are somewhat smaller. The possession of two of these is supposed to compensate for the absence of so much air and exercise as can be had, in the dull strip attached to each of the others, in an hour's time every day; and therefore every prisoner in this upper story has two cells, adjoining, and communicating with, each other.

Standing at the central point, and looking down these dreary passages, the dull repose and quiet that prevails is awful. Occasionally there is a drowsy sound from some lone weaver's shuttle, or shoemaker's last, but it is stifled by the thick walls and heavy dungeon door, and only serves to make the general stillness more profound. Over the head and face of every prisoner who comes into this melancholy house, a black hood is drawn; and in this dark shroud, an emblem of the curtain dropped between him and the living world, he is led to the cell from which he never again comes forth until his whole

term of imprisonment has expired. He never hears of wife or children; home or friends; the life or death of any single creature. He sees the prison officers, but, with that exception, he never looks upon a human countenance, or hears a human voice. He is a man buried alive; to be dug out in the slow round of years; and in the mean time dead to everything but torturing anxieties and horrible despair.

His name, and crime, and term of suffering are unknown, even to the officer who delivers him his daily food. There is a number over his cell door, and in a book of which the governor of the prison has one copy, and the moral instructor another: this is the index to his history. Beyond these pages the prison has no record of his existence; and though he live to be in the same cell ten weary years, he has no means of knowing, down to the very last hour, in what part of the building it is situated; what kind of men there are about him; whether in the long winter nights there are living people near, or he is in some lonely corner of the great jail, with walls, and passages, and iron doors between him and the nearest sharer in its solitary horrors.

Every cell has double doors: the outer one of sturdy oak, the other of grated iron, wherein there is a trap through which his food is handed. He has a Bible, and a slate and pencil, and, under certain restrictions, has sometimes other books, provided for the purpose, and pen and ink and paper. His razor, plate, and can, and basin, hang upon the wall, or shine upon the little shelf. Fresh water is laid on in every cell, and he can draw it at his pleasure. During the day, his bedstead turns up against the wall, and leaves more space for him to work in. His loom, or bench, or wheel, is there; and there he labours, sleeps and wakes, and counts the seasons as they change, and grows old.

The first man I saw was seated at his loom, at work. He had been there six years, and was to remain, I think, three more. He had been convicted as a receiver of stolen goods, but even after this long imprisonment denied his guilt, and said he had been hardly dealt by. It was his second offence.

He stopped his work when we went in, took off his spectacles, and answered freely to everything that was said to him, but always with a strange kind of pause first, and in a low, thoughtful voice. He wore a paper hat of his own making,

and was pleased to have it noticed and commended. He had very ingeniously manufactured a sort of Dutch clock from some disregarded odds and ends; and his vinegar bottle served for the pendulum. Seeing me interested in this contrivance, he looked up at it with a great deal of pride, and said that he had been thinking of improving it, and that he hoped the hammer and a little piece of broken glass beside it "would play music before long." He had extracted some colours from the yarn with which he worked, and painted a few poor figures on the wall. One, of a female, over the door, he called "The Lady of the Lake."

He smiled as I looked at these contrivances to wile away the time; but when I looked from them to him, I saw that his lip trembled, and could have counted the beatings of his heart. I forget how it came about, but some allusion was made to his having a wife. He shook his head at the word, turned aside, and covered his face with his hands.

"But you are resigned now?" said one of the gentlemen after a short pause, during which he had resumed his former manner. He answered with a sigh that seemed quite reckless in its hopelessness, "Oh, yes, oh, yes! I am resigned to it." "And are a better man, you think?" "Well, I hope so: I'm sure I hope I may be." "And time goes pretty quickly?" "Time is very long, gentlemen, within these four walls!"

He gazed about him — Heaven only knows how wearily! — as he said these words; and in the act of doing so, fell into a strange stare as if he had forgotten something. A moment afterwards he sighed heavily, put on his spectacles, and went about his work again.

In another cell there was a German, sentenced to five years' imprisonment for larceny, two of which had just expired. With colours procured in the same manner, he had painted every inch of the walls and ceiling quite beautifully. He had laid out the few feet of ground, behind, with exquisite neatness, and had made a little bed in the centre, that looked by the by like a grave. The taste and ingenuity he had displayed in everything were most extraordinary; and yet a more dejected, heart-broken, wretched creature, it would be difficult to imagine. I never saw such a picture of forlorn affliction and distress of mind. My heart bled for him; and when the tears ran down his cheeks, and he took one of the visitors

aside, to ask, with his trembling hands nervously clutching at his coat to detain him, whether there was no hope of his dismal sentence being commuted, the spectacle was really too painful to witness. I never saw or heard of any kind of misery that impressed me more than the wretchedness of this man.

In a third cell was a tall strong black, a burglar, working at his proper trade of making screws and the like. His time was nearly out. He was not only a very dexterous thief, but was notorious for his boldness and hardihood, and for the number of his previous convictions. He entertained us with a long account of his achievements, which he narrated with such infinite relish that he actually seemed to lick his lips as he told us racy anecdotes of stolen plate, and of old ladies whom he had watched as they sat at windows in silver spectacles (he had plainly had an eye to their metal, even from the other side of the street), and had afterwards robbed. This fellow, upon the slightest encouragement, would have mingled with his professional recollections the most detestable cant; but I am very much mistaken if he could have surpassed the unmitigated hypocrisy with which he declared that he blessed the day on which he came into that prison, and that he never would commit another robbery as long as he lived.

There was one man who was allowed, as an indulgence, to keep rabbits. His room having rather a close smell in consequence, they called to him at the door to come out into the passage. He complied, of course, and stood shading his haggard face in the unwonted sunlight of the great window, looking as wan and unearthly as if he had been summoned from the grave. He had a white rabbit in his breast; and when the little creature, getting down upon the ground, stole back into the cell, and he, being dismissed, crept timidly after it, I thought it would have been very hard to say in what respect the man was the nobler animal of the two.

There was an English thief, who had been there but a few days out of seven years: a villainous, low-browed, thin-lipped fellow, with a white face; who had as yet no relish for visitors, and who, but for the additional penalty, would have gladly stabbed me with his shoemaker's knife. There was another German who had entered the jail but yesterday, and who started from his bed when we looked in, and pleaded, in

his broken English, very hard for work. There was a poet, who after doing two days' work in every four and twenty hours, one for himself and one for the prison, wrote verses about ships (he was by trade a mariner), and the "maddening wine-cup," and his friends at home. There were very many of them. Some reddened at the sight of visitors, and some turned very pale. Some two or three had prisoner nurses with them, for they were very sick, and one, a fat old negro, whose leg had been taken off within the jail, had for his attendant a classical scholar and an accomplished surgeon, himself a prisoner likewise. Sitting upon the stairs, engaged in some slight work, was a pretty coloured boy. "Is there no refuge for young criminals in Philadelphia, then?" said I. "Yes, but only for white children." Noble aristocracy in crime!

There was a sailor who had been there upwards of eleven years, and who in a few months' time would be free. Eleven years of solitary confinement!

"I am very glad to hear your time is nearly out." What does he say? Nothing. Why does he stare at his hands, and pick the flesh upon his fingers, and raise his eyes for an instant, every now and then, to those bare walls which have seen his head turn grey? It is a way he has sometimes.

Does he never look men in the face, and does he always pluck at those hands of his, as though he were bent on parting skin and bone? It is his humour; nothing more.

It is his humour, too, to say that he does not look forward to going out; that he is not glad the time is drawing near; that he did look forward to it once, but that was very long ago; that he has lost all care for everything. It is his humour to be a helpless, crushed, and broken man. And Heaven be his witness that he has his humour thoroughly gratified!

There were three young women in adjoining cells, all convicted at the same time of a conspiracy to rob their prosecutor. In the silence and solitude of their lives they had grown to be quite beautiful. Their looks were very sad, and might have moved the sternest visitor to tears, but not to that kind of sorrow which the contemplation of the men awakens. One was a young girl — not twenty, as I recollect — whose snow-white room was hung with the work of some former prisoner, and upon whose downcast face the sun in all its splendour shone down through the high chink in the wall, where one

narrow strip of bright blue sky was visible. She was very penitent and quiet; had come to be resigned, she said (and I believe her); and had a mind at peace. "In a word, you are happy here?" said one of my companions. She struggled—she did struggle very hard—to answer, Yes; but raising her eyes, and meeting that glimpse of freedom overhead, she burst into tears, and said, "She tried to be; she uttered no complaint; but it was natural that she should sometimes long to go out of that one cell: she could not help *that*," she sobbed, poor thing!

I went from cell to cell that day; and every face I saw, or word I heard, or incident I noted, is present to my mind in all its painfulness. But let me pass them by, for one, more pleasant, glance of a prison on the same plan which I afterwards saw at Pittsburgh.

When I had gone over that, in the same manner, I asked the governor if he had any person in his charge who was shortly going out. He had one, he said, whose time was up next day; but he had only been a prisoner two years.

Two years! I looked back through two years in my own life—out of jail, prosperous, happy, surrounded by blessings, comforts, and good fortune—and thought how wide a gap it was, and how long those two years passed in solitary captivity would have been. I have the face of this man, who was going to be released next day, before me now. It is almost more memorable in its happiness than the other faces in their misery. How easy and how natural it was for him to say that the system was a good one; and that the time went "pretty quick—considering;" and that when a man once felt he had offended the law, and must satisfy it, "he got along, somehow:" and so forth!

"What did he call you back to say to you, in that strange flutter?" I asked of my conductor, when he had locked the door and joined me in the passage.

"Oh! That he was afraid the soles of his boots were not fit for walking, as they were a good deal worn when he came in; and that he would thank me very much to have them mended, ready."

Those boots had been taken off his feet, and put away with the rest of his clothes, two years before!

I took that opportunity of inquiring how they conducted

themselves immediately before going out; adding that I presumed they trembled very much.

"Well, it 's not so much a trembling," was the answer — "though they do quiver — as a complete derangement of the nervous system. They can't sign their names to the book; sometimes can't even hold the pen; look about 'em without appearing to know why, or where they are; and sometimes get up and sit down again, twenty times in a minute. This is when they 're in the office, where they are taken with the hood on, as they were brought in. When they get outside the gate, they stop, and look first one way and then the other: not knowing which to take. Sometimes they stagger as if they were drunk, and sometimes are forced to lean against the fence, they 're so bad: — but they clear off in course of time."

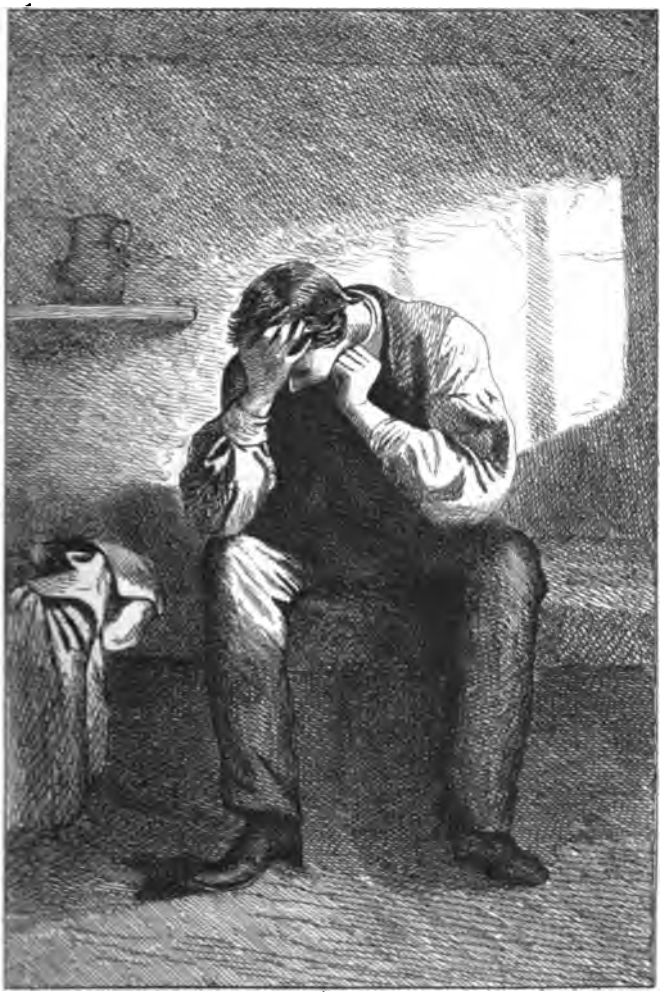
As I walked among these solitary cells, and looked at the faces of the men within them, I tried to picture to myself the thoughts and feelings natural to their condition. I imagined the hood just taken off, and the scene of their captivity disclosed to them in all its dismal monotony.

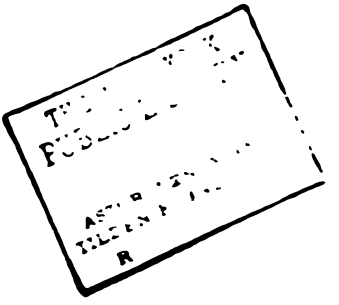
At first, the man is stunned. His confinement is a hideous vision; and his old life a reality. He throws himself upon his bed, and lies there abandoned to despair. By degrees the insupportable solitude and barrenness of the place rouses him from this stupour, and when the trap in his grated door is opened, he humbly begs and prays for work. "Give me some work to do, or I shall go raving mad!"

He has it; and by fits and starts applies himself to labour; but every now and then there comes upon him a burning sense of the years that must be wasted in that stone coffin, and an agony so piercing in the recollection of those who are hidden from his view and knowledge that he starts from his seat, and, striding up and down the narrow room with both hands clasped on his uplifted head, hears spirits tempting him to beat his brains out on the wall.

Again he falls upon his bed, and lies there moaning. Suddenly he starts up, wondering whether any other man is near: whether there is another cell like that on either side of him; and listens keenly.

There is no sound, but other prisoners may be near for all that. He remembers to have heard once, when he little thought of coming here himself, that the cells were so con-





structed that the prisoners could not hear each other, though the officers could hear them. Where is the nearest man — upon the right, or on the left? or is there one in both directions? Where is he sitting now — with his face to the light? or is he walking to and fro? How is he dressed? Has he been here long? Is he much worn away? Is he very white and spectre-like? Does *he* think of his neighbour, too?

Scarcely venturing to breathe, and listening while he thinks, he conjures up a figure with his back towards him, and imagines it moving about in this next cell. He has no idea of the face, but he is certain of the dark form of a stooping man. In the cell upon the other side he puts another figure, whose face is hidden from him also. Day after day, and often when he wakes up in the middle of the night, he thinks of these two men until he is almost distracted. He never changes them. There they are always as he first imagined them — an old man on the right; a younger man upon the left — whose hidden features torture him to death, and have a mystery that makes him tremble.

The weary days pass on with solemn pace, like mourners at a funeral; and slowly he begins to feel that the white walls of the cell have something dreadful in them; that their colour is horrible; that their smooth surface chills his blood; that there is one hateful corner which torments him. Every morning when he wakes, he hides his head beneath the coverlet, and shudders to see the ghastly ceiling looking down upon him. The blessed light of day itself peeps in, an ugly phantom face, through the unchangeable crevice which is his prison window.

By slow but sure degrees, the terrors of that hateful corner swell until they beset him at all times; invade his rest, make his dreams hideous, and his nights dreadful. At first, he took a strange dislike to it; feeling as though it gave birth in his brain to something of corresponding shape, which ought not to be there, and racked his head with pains. Then he began to fear it, then to dream of it, and of men whispering its name and pointing to it. Then he could not bear to look at it, nor yet to turn his back upon it. Now, it is every night the lurking-place of a ghost — a shadow — a silent something, horrible to see, but whether bird, or beast, or muffled human shape, he cannot tell.

When he is in his cell by day, he fears the little yard w
out. When he is in the yard, he dreads to re
When night comes, there stands the phantom in t
If he have the courage to stand in its place, a
(he had once, being desperate), it broods upon his
the twilight, and always at the same hour, a
by name; as the darkness thickens, his
and even that, his comfort, is a hideous figure, wa
till daybreak.

Again, by slow degrees, these horrible fancies
him one by one; returning sometimes, unexpe
longer intervals, and in less alarming shapes. He
upon religious matters with the gentleman who v
has read his Bible, and has written a prayer
and hung it up as a kind of protection, and as
Heavenly companionship. He dreams now,
children or his wife, but is sure that they are
deserted him. He is easily moved to tears,
sive, and broken-spirited. Occasionally the
back: a very little thing will revive it, even a
or the scent of summer flowers in the air, but it
long, now, for the world without has come to be
and this solitary life the real reality.

If his term of imprisonment be short — I
tively, for short it cannot be — the last half
worse than all; for then he thinks the prison
he be burnt in the ruins; or that he is
the walls; or that he will be detained on
sentenced for another term; or that something,
what, must happen to prevent his going at large. As
natural, and impossible to be reasoned against, be
his long separation from human life, and his great
any event will appear to him more probable in the
plation than the being restored to liberty and his
tures.

If his period of confinement have been very
part of release bewilders and confuses him. His
may flutter for a moment, when he thinks of the
side, and what it might have been to him in all
years, but that is all. The cell door has been
on all its hopes and cares. Better to have hanged him

beginning than bring him to this pass, and send him forth to mingle with his kind, who are his kind no more.

On the haggard face of every man among these prisoners the same expression sat. I know not what to liken it to. It had something of that strained attention which we see upon the faces of the blind and deaf, mingled with a kind of horror, as though they had all been secretly terrified. In every little chamber that I entered, and at every grate through which I looked, I seemed to see the same appalling countenance. It lives in my memory, with the fascination of a remarkable picture. Parade before my eyes a hundred men, with one among them newly released from this solitary suffering, and I would point him out.

The faces of the women, as I have said, it humanises and refines. Whether this be because of their better nature, which is elicited in solitude, or because of their being gentler creatures, of greater patience and longer suffering, I do not know; but so it is. That the punishment is nevertheless, to my thinking, fully as cruel and as wrong in their case as in that of the men, I need scarcely add.

My firm conviction is that, independent of the mental anguish it occasions — an anguish so acute and so tremendous that all imagination of it must fall far short of the reality — it wears the mind into a morbid state, which renders it unfit for the rough contact and busy action of the world. It is my fixed opinion that those who have undergone this punishment MUST pass into society again morally unhealthy and diseased. There are many instances on record of men who have chosen, or have been condemned, to lives of perfect solitude, but I scarcely remember one, even among sages of strong and vigorous intellect, where its effect has not become apparent, in some disordered train of thought, or some gloomy hallucination. What monstrous phantoms, bred of despondency and doubt, and born and reared in solitude, have stalked upon the earth, making creation ugly, and darkening the face of Heaven!

Suicides are rare among these prisoners — are almost, indeed, unknown. But no argument in favour of the system can reasonably be deduced from this circumstance, although it is very often urged. All men who have made diseases of the mind their study know perfectly well that such extreme depression and despair as will change the whole character, and

beat down all its powers of elasticity and self-resistance [illegible] be at work within a man, and yet stop short of [illegible] This is a common case.

That it makes the senses dull, and by degrees [illegible] bodily faculties, I am quite sure. I remarked [illegible] were with me in this very establishment at P[illegible] the criminals who had been there long were deaf [illegible] were in the habit of seeing these men constantly, [illegible] fectly amazed at the idea, which they regarded as [illegible] and fanciful. And yet the very first prisoner to [illegible] appealed — one of their own selection — confirmed [illegible] sion (which was unknown to him) instantly, and [illegible] a genuine air it was impossible to doubt, that [illegible] think how it happened, but he was growing very [illegible] hearing.

That it is a singularly unequal punishment, and [illegible] worst man least, there is no doubt. In its [illegible] as a means of reformation, compared with that [illegible] regulations which allows the prisoners to work [illegible] without communicating together, I have not the [illegible] All the instances of reformation that were [illegible] were of a kind that might have been — and I have [illegible] whatever, in my own mind, would have been — [illegible] brought about by the Silent System. With regard to [illegible] men as the negro burglar and the English thief, even the [illegible] enthusiastic have scarcely any hope of their conversion.

It seems to me that the objection that nothing [illegible] or good has ever had its growth in such unnatural [illegible] that even a dog or any of the more intelligent among [illegible] would pine, and mope, and rust away, beneath its [illegible] would be in itself a sufficient argument against this [illegible] But when we recollect, in addition, how very cruel and [illegible] it is, and that a solitary life is always liable to peculiar [illegible] distinct objections of a most deplorable nature, which [illegible] arisen here, and call to mind, moreover, that the [illegible] not between this system and a bad or ill-considered one, between it and another which has worked well, and is, in whole design and practice, excellent, there is surely more [illegible] sufficient reason for abandoning a mode of punishment [illegible] by so little hope or promise, and fraught, beyond dispute, [illegible] such a host of evils.

As a relief to its contemplation, I will close this chapter with a curious story, arising out of the same theme, which was related to me, on the occasion of this visit, by some of the gentlemen concerned.

At one of the periodical meetings of the inspectors of this prison, a working man of Philadelphia presented himself before the Board, and earnestly requested to be placed in solitary confinement. On being asked what motive could possibly prompt him to make this strange demand, he answered that he had an irresistible propensity to get drunk; that he was constantly indulging it, to his great misery and ruin; that he had no power of resistance; that he wished to be put beyond the reach of temptation; and that he could think of no better way than this. It was pointed out to him, in reply, that the prison was for criminals who had been tried and sentenced by the law, and could not be made available for any such fanciful purposes; he was exhorted to abstain from intoxicating drinks, as he surely might if he would; and received other very good advice, with which he retired, exceedingly dissatisfied with the result of his application.

He came again, and again, and again, and was so very earnest and importunate that at last they took counsel together, and said, "He will certainly qualify himself for admission, if we reject him any more. Let us shut him up. He will soon be glad to go away, and then we shall get rid of him." So they made him sign a statement which would prevent his ever sustaining an action for false imprisonment, to the effect that his incarceration was voluntary, and of his own seeking; they requested him to take notice that the officer in attendance had orders to release him at any hour of the day or night, when he might knock upon his door for that purpose; but desired him to understand that, once going out, he would not be admitted any more. These conditions agreed upon, and he still remaining in the same mind, he was conducted to the prison, and shut up in one of the cells.

In this cell, the man, who had not the firmness to leave a glass of liquor standing untasted on a table before him — in this cell, in solitary confinement, and working every day at his trade of shoemaking, this man remained nearly two years. His health beginning to fail at the expiration of that time, the surgeon recommended that he should work occasionally in the

garden; and as he liked the notion very much, he went to this new occupation with great cheerfulness.

He was digging here, one summer day, very early in the morning, when the wicket in the outer gate chanced to be open, and showing, beyond, the well-remembered dusty road and the burnt fields. The way was as free to him as to any living, but he no sooner raised his head and caught sight of it all shining in the light, than, with the instinct of a prisoner, he cast away his spade, scampered off as fast as his legs would carry him, and never once looked back.

CHAPTER VIII

WASHINGTON; THE LEGISLATURE; AND THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE.

We left Philadelphia by steamboat, at six o'clock one very cold morning, and turned our faces towards Washington.

In the course of this day's journey, as on subsequent occasions, we encountered some Englishmen (small farmers, perhaps, or country publicans at home) who were settled in America, and were travelling on their own affairs. Of all grades and kinds of men that jostle one in the public conveyances of the States, these are often the most intolerable and the most insufferable companions. United to every disagreeable characteristic that the worst kind of American travellers possess, these countrymen of ours display an amount of insolent conceit and cool assumption of superiority, quite monstrous to behold. In the coarse familiarity of their approach, and the effrontery of their inquisitiveness (which they are in great haste to assert as if they panted to revenge themselves upon the decent old restraints of home), they surpass any native specimens that came within my range of observation; and I often grew so patriotic when I saw and heard them that I would cheerfully have submitted to a reasonable fine, if I could have given any other country in the whole world the honour of claiming them for its children.

As Washington may be called the headquarters of tobacco-tinctured saliva, the time is come when I must confess, without any disguise, that the prevalence of those two odious practices of chewing and expectorating began about this time to be anything but agreeable, and soon became most offensive and sickening. In all the public places of America, this filthy custom is recognised. In the courts of law, the judge has his spittoon, the crier his, the witness his, and the prisoner his; while the jurymen and spectators are provided for, as so many men who in the course of nature must desire to spit incessantly. In the hospitals, the students of medicine are

requested, by notices upon the wall, to eject the[illegible] juice into the boxes provided for that purpose, a[illegible] discolour the stairs. In public buildings, visitors are through the same agency, to squirt the essence of [illegible] or "plugs," as I have heard them called by gentlemen in this kind of sweetmeat, into the national spittoons about the bases of the marble columns. But in [illegible] this custom is inseparably mixed up with every morning call, and with all the transactions of [illegible] stranger, who follows in the track I took myself, will in its full bloom and glory, luxuriant in all its [illegible] lessness, at Washington. And let him not persuade [illegible] (as I once did, to my shame), that previous to [illegible] exaggerated its extent. The thing itself is an exaggeration nastiness which cannot be outdone.

On board this steamboat, there were two young gentlemen with shirt-collars reversed as usual, and armed with [illegible] walking-sticks, who planted two seats in the middle of the deck, at a distance of some four paces apart, took out tobacco-boxes, and sat down opposite each other, to [illegible] less than a quarter of an hour's time, these hopeful youths shed about them on the clean boards a copious shower of [illegible] low rain; clearing, by that means, a kind of [illegible] within whose limits no intruders dared to come, and [illegible] they never failed to refresh and re-refresh before a spot was dry. This being before breakfast rather disposed me, I confess, to nausea; but looking attentively at one of the expectorators, I plainly saw that he was young in chewing, and inwardly uneasy himself. A glow of delight came over me at this discovery, and as I marked his face turn paler and paler, and saw the ball of tobacco in his left cheek quiver with suppressed agony, while yet he spat, and chewed, and spat again, in emulation of his older friend, I could have flung his neck and implored him to go on for hours.

We all sat down to a comfortable breakfast in the cabin below, where there was no more hurry or confusion than at such a meal in England, and where there was certainly great politeness exhibited than at most of our stage-coach breakfasts. At about nine o'clock we arrived at the railroad station, and went on by the cars. At noon we turned out again, to cross a wide river in another steamboat; landed at a certain [illegible]

the railroad on the opposite shore; and went on by other cars; in which, in the course of the next hour or so, we crossed by wooden bridges, each a mile in length, two creeks, called respectively Great and Little Gunpowder. The water in both was blackened with flights of canvas-backed ducks, which are most delicious eating, and abound hereabouts at that season of the year.

These bridges are of wood, have no parapet, and are only just wide enough for the passage of the trains; which, in the event of the smallest accident, would inevitably be plunged into the river. They are startling contrivances, and are most agreeable when passed.

We stopped to dine at Baltimore, and, being now in Maryland, were waited on, for the first time, by slaves. The sensation of exacting any service from human creatures who are bought and sold, and being, for the time, a party as it were to their condition, is not an enviable one. The institution exists, perhaps, in its least repulsive and most mitigated form in such a town as this; but it *is* slavery; and though I was with respect to it an innocent man, its presence filled me with a sense of shame and self-reproach.

After dinner, we went down to the railroad again, and took our seats in the cars for Washington. Being rather early, those men and boys who happened to have nothing particular to do and were curious in foreigners, came (according to custom) round the carriage in which I sat; let down all the windows; thrust in their heads and shoulders; hooked themselves on conveniently by their elbows; and fell to comparing notes on the subject of my personal appearance, with as much indifference as if I were a stuffed figure. I never gained so much uncompromising information with reference to my own nose and eyes, the various impressions wrought by my mouth and chin on different minds, and how my head looks when it is viewed from behind, as on these occasions. Some gentlemen were only satisfied by exercising their sense of touch; and the boys (who are surprisingly precocious in America) were seldom satisfied, even by that, but would return to the charge over and over again. Many a budding President has walked into my room with his cap on his head and his hands in his pockets, and stared at me for two whole hours; occasionally refreshing himself with a tweak at his nose, or a draught from the water-jug; or by walk-

ing to the windows and inviting other boys [illegible] to come up and do likewise: crying, "Here [illegible] on!" "Bring all your brothers!" with [illegible] treaties of that nature.

We reached Washington at about half-past [illegible] and had upon the way a beautiful view of the [illegible] a fine building of the Corinthian order, [illegible] and commanding eminence. Arrived at the [illegible] I [illegible] more of the place that night; being very tired, and [illegible] to bed.

Breakfast over next morning, I walk about the [illegible] hour or two, and, coming home, throw up the [illegible] front and back, and look out. Here is Washington [illegible] my mind and under my eye.

Take the worst parts of the City Road and Pentonville, the straggling outskirts of Paris, where the houses are [illegible] preserving all their oddities, but especially the [illegible] dwellings, occupied in Pentonville (but not in Washington) furniture-brokers, keepers of poor eating-houses, and [illegible] birds. Burn the whole down; build it up again in [illegible] plaster; widen it a little; throw in part of St. John's Wood; put green blinds outside all the private houses, with a [illegible] tain and a white one in every window, plough up all the [illegible] plant a great deal of coarse turf in every place where it [illegible] *not* to be; erect three handsome buildings in stone and [illegible] anywhere, but the more entirely out of everybody's way [illegible] better; call one the Post Office, one the Patent Office, [illegible] the Treasury; make it scorching hot in the morning, and [illegible] ing cold in the afternoon, with an occasional [illegible] and dust; leave a brickfield without the bricks, in all [illegible] places where a street may naturally be expected — and [illegible] Washington.

The hotel in which we live is a long row of [illegible] fronting on the street, and opening at the back [illegible] mon yard, in which hangs a great triangle. Whenever a [illegible] vant is wanted, somebody beats on this triangle from [illegible] up to seven, according to the number of the house in which his presence is required, and as all the servants are [illegible] being wanted, and none of them ever come, this [illegible] engine is in full performance the whole day through [illegible] are drying in this same yard, female slaves, with cotton [illegible]

kerchiefs twisted round their heads, are running to and fro on the hotel business; black waiters cross and recross with dishes in their hands; two great dogs are playing upon a mound of loose bricks in the centre of the little square; a pig is turning up his stomach to the sun, and grunting "that's comfortable!" and neither the men, nor the women, nor the dogs, nor the pig, nor any created creature takes the smallest notice of the triangle, which is tingling madly all the time.

I walk to the front window, and look across the road upon a long, straggling row of houses, one story high, terminating, nearly opposite, but a little to the left, in a melancholy piece of waste ground with frowzy grass, which looks like a small piece of country that has taken to drinking, and has quite lost itself. Standing anyhow and all wrong, upon this open space, like something meteoric that has fallen down from the moon, is an odd, lop-sided, one-eyed kind of wooden building, that looks like a church, with a flag-staff as long as itself sticking out of a steeple something larger than a tea-chest. Under the window is a small stand of coaches, whose slave drivers are sunning themselves on the steps of our door, and talking idly together. The three most obtrusive houses near at hand are the three meanest. On one — a shop, which never has anything in the window, and never has the door open — is painted in large characters, "THE CITY LUNCH." At another, which looks like the back way to somewhere else, but is an independent building in itself, oysters are procurable in every style. At the third, which is a very, very little tailor's shop, pants are fixed to order; or, in other words, pantaloons are made to measure. And that is our street in Washington.

It is sometimes called the City of Magnificent Distances, but it might with greater propriety be termed the City of Magnificent Intentions; for it is only on taking a bird's-eye view of it from the top of the Capitol that one can at all comprehend the vast designs of its projector, an aspiring Frenchman. Spacious avenues, that begin in nothing, and lead nowhere; streets, mile-long, that only want houses, roads, and inhabitants; public buildings that need but a public to be complete; and ornaments of great thoroughfares, which only lack great thoroughfares to ornament — are its leading features. One might fancy the season over, and most of the houses gone out of town for ever with their masters. To the admirers of cities it is a Barmecide

Feast; a pleasant field for the imagination to rove in; a monument raised to a deceased project, with not even an inscription to record its departed greatness.

Such as it is, it is likely to remain. It was originally chosen for the seat of Government, as a means of averting the conflicting jealousies and interests of the different States; and very probably, too, as being remote from mobs: a consideration not to be slighted, even in America. It has no trade or commerce of its own; having little or no population beyond the President and his establishment; the members of the legislature who reside there during the session; the Government clerks and officers employed in the various departments; the keepers of the hotels and boarding-houses; and the tradesmen who supply their tables. It is very unhealthy. Few people would live in Washington, I take it, who were not obliged to reside there; and the tides of emigration and speculation, those rapid and regardless currents, are little likely to flow at any time towards such dull and sluggish water.

The principal features of the Capitol are, of course, the two Houses of Assembly. But there is, besides, in the centre of the building, a fine rotunda, ninety-six feet in diameter, and ninety-six high, whose circular wall is divided into compartments, ornamented by historical pictures. Four of these have for their subjects prominent events in the Revolutionary struggle. They were painted by Colonel Trumbull, himself a member of Washington's staff at the time of their occurrence; from which circumstance they derive a peculiar interest of their own. In this same hall Mr. Greenough's large statue of Washington has been lately placed. It has great merits of course, but it struck me as being rather strained and violent for its subject. I could wish, however, to have seen it in a better light than it can ever be viewed in where it stands.

There is a very pleasant and commodious library in the Capitol; and from a balcony in front, the bird's-eye view, of which I have just spoken, may be had, together with a beautiful prospect of the adjacent country. In one of the ornamented portions of the building, there is a figure of Justice; whereunto the Guide Book says, "the artist at first contemplated giving more of nudity, but he was warned that the public sentiment in this country would not admit of it, and in his caution he has gone, perhaps, into the opposite extr

Poor Justice! she has been made to wear much stranger garments in America than those she pines in, in the Capitol. Let us hope that she has changed her dressmaker since they were fashioned, and that the public sentiment of the country did not cut out the clothes she hides her lovely figure in, just now.

The House of Representatives is a beautiful and spacious hall of semi-circular shape, supported by handsome pillars. One part of the gallery is appropriated to the ladies, and there they sit in front rows, and come in, and go out, as at a play or concert. The chair is canopied, and raised considerably above the floor of the House; and every member has an easy-chair and a writing desk to himself, which is denounced by some people out of doors as a most unfortunate and injudicious arrangement, tending to long sittings and prosaic speeches. It is an elegant chamber to look at, but a singularly bad one for all purposes of hearing. The Senate, which is smaller, is free from this objection, and is exceedingly well adapted to the uses for which it is designed. The sittings, I need hardly add, take place in the day; and the parliamentary forms are modelled on those of the old country.

I was sometimes asked, in my progress through other places, whether I had not been very much impressed by the *heads* of the lawmakers at Washington; meaning not their chiefs and leaders, but literally their individual and personal heads, whereon their hair grew, and whereby the phrenological character of each legislator was expressed; and I almost as often struck my questioner dumb with indignant consternation by answering No; that I didn't remember being at all overcome. As I must, at whatever hazard, repeat the avowal here, I will follow it up by relating my impressions on this subject in as few words as possible.

In the first place — it may be from some imperfect development of my organ of veneration — I do not remember having ever fainted away, or having even been moved to tears of joyful pride, at sight of any legislative body. I have borne the House of Commons like a man, and have yielded to no weakness but slumber in the House of Lords. I have seen elections for borough and county, and have never been impelled (no matter which party won) to damage my hat by throwing it up into the air in triumph, or to crack my voice by shouting

forth any reference to our Glorious C[illegible] purity of our independent voters, or the [illegible] rity of our independent members. Ha[illegible] strong attacks upon my fortitude, it is p[illegible] of a cold and insensible temperament, an[illegible] such matters; and therefore my impress[illegible] of the Capitol at Washington must be re[illegible] grains of allowance as this free confess[illegible]

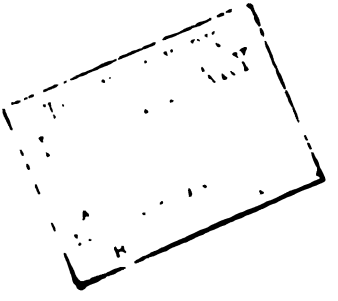
Did I see in this public body an a[illegible] together in the sacred names of Liberty and Fr[illegible] asserting the chaste dignity of these twin go[illegible] discussions, as to exalt at once the Eternal Pr[illegible] their names are given, and their own character, a[illegible] ter of their countrymen, in the admiring eyes of t[illegible] world?

It was but a week since an aged, grey-haired m[illegible] honour to the land that gave him birth, who h[illegible] service to his country, as his forefathers did, a[illegible] remembered scores upon scores of years after th[illegible] in its corruption are but so many grains of dust — it was week since this old man had stood for days upon [illegible] before this very body, charged with having dared to a[illegible] infamy of that traffic, which has for its accursed [illegible] men and women and their unborn children. Yes, publicly exhibited in the same city all the wh[illegible] framed, and glazed; hung up for general admirat[illegible] strangers not with shame, but pride; its face t[illegible] towards the wall, itself not taken down and burned, [illegible] Unanimous Declaration of The Thirteen United States America, which solemnly declares that All Men are [illegible] Equal; and are endowed by their Creator with the In[illegible] Rights of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

It was not a month since this same body had sat calmly and heard a man, one of themselves, with oaths which [illegible] in their drink reject, threaten to cut another's throat fr[illegible] to ear. There he sat among them, not crushed by the g[illegible] eral feeling of the assembly, but as good a man as any

There was but a week to come, and another of that b[illegible] for doing his duty to those who sent him there [illegible] in a Republic the Liberty and Freedom of expressing [illegible] sentiments, and making known their prayer, would be tr[illegible]

ROS



found guilty, and have strong censure passed upon him by the rest. His was a grave offence indeed; for years before he had risen up and said, "A gang of male and female slaves for sale, warranted to breed like cattle, linked to each other by iron fetters, are passing now along the open street beneath the windows of your Temple of Equality! Look!" But there are many kinds of hunters engaged in the Pursuit of Happiness, and they go variously armed. It is the Inalienable Right of some among them to take the field after *their* Happiness, equipped with cat and cartwhip, stocks, and iron collar, and to shout their view halloa! (always in praise of Liberty) to the music of clanking chains and bloody stripes.

Where sat the many legislators of coarse threats; of words and blows such as coal-heavers deal upon each other, when they forget their breeding? On every side. Every session had its anecdotes of that kind, and the actors were all there.

Did I recognise in this assembly a body of men, who, applying themselves in a new world to correct some of the falsehoods and vices of the old, purified the avenues to Public Life, paved the dirty ways to Place and Power, debated and made laws for the Common Good, and had no party but their Country?

I saw in them the wheels that move the meanest perversion of virtuous Political Machinery that the worst tools ever wrought. Despicable trickery at elections; under-handed tamperings with public officers; cowardly attacks upon opponents, with scurrilous newspapers for shields, and hired pens for daggers; shameful trucklings to mercenary knaves, whose claim to be considered is that every day and week they sow new crops of ruin with their venal types, which are the dragon's teeth of yore in everything but sharpness; aidings and abettings of every bad inclination in the popular mind, and artful suppressions of all its good influences — such things as these, and in a word, Dishonest Faction in its most depraved and most unblushing form, stared out from every corner of the crowded hall.

Did I see among them the intelligence and refinement, the true, honest, patriotic heart of America? Here and there were drops of its blood and life, but they scarcely coloured the stream of desperate adventurers which sets that way for profit and for pay. It is the game of these men, and of their profligate organs, to make the strife of politics so fierce and brutal,

and so destructive of all self-respect in worthy men, that sensitive and delicate-minded persons shall be kept aloof, and they, and such as they, be left to battle out their selfish views unchecked. And thus this lowest of all scrambling fights goes on, and they who in other countries would, from their intelligence and station, most aspire to make the laws, do here recoil the farthest from that degradation.

That there are, among the representatives of the people in both Houses, and among all parties, some men of high character and great abilities, I need not say. The foremost among those politicians who are known in Europe have been already described, and I see no reason to depart from the rule I have laid down for my guidance, of abstaining from all mention of individuals. It will be sufficient to add that to the most favourable accounts that have been written of them I more than fully and most heartily subscribe; and that personal intercourse and free communication have bred within me, not the result predicted in the very doubtful proverb, but increased admiration and respect. They are striking men to look at, hard to deceive, prompt to act, lions in energy, Crichtons in varied accomplishment, Indians in fire of eye and gesture, Americans in strong and generous impulse; and they as well represent the honour and wisdom of their country at home as the distinguished gentleman who is now its Minister at the British Court sustains its highest character abroad.

I visited both Houses nearly every day during my stay in Washington. On my initiatory visit to the House of Representatives they divided against a decision of the chair; but the chair won. The second time I went, the member who was speaking, being interrupted by a laugh, mimicked it, as one child would in quarrelling with another, and added, "that he would make honourable gentlemen opposite sing out a little more on the other side of their mouths presently." But interruptions are rare; the speaker being usually heard in silence. There are more quarrels than with us, and more threatenings than gentlemen are accustomed to exchange in any civilised society of which we have record; but farm-yard imitations have not as yet been imported from the Parliament of the United Kingdom. The feature in oratory which appears to be the most practised, and most relished, is the constant repetition of the same idea or shadow of an idea in fresh words; and the

inquiry out of doors is not, "What did he say?" but, "How long did he speak?" These, however, are but enlargements of a principle which prevails elsewhere.

The Senate is a dignified and decorous body, and its proceedings are conducted with much gravity and order. Both houses are handsomely carpeted; but the state to which these carpets are reduced by the universal disregard of the spittoon with which every honourable member is accommodated, and the extraordinary improvements on the pattern which are squirted and dabbled upon it in every direction, do not admit of being described. I will merely observe that I strongly recommend all strangers not to look at the floor; and if they happen to drop anything, though it be their purse, not to pick it up with an ungloved hand on any account.

It is somewhat remarkable, too, at first, to say the least, to see so many honourable members with swelled faces; and it is scarcely less remarkable to discover that this appearance is caused by the quantity of tobacco they contrive to stow within the hollow of the cheek. It is strange enough, too, to see an honourable gentleman leaning back in his tilted chair with his legs on the desk before him, shaping a convenient "plug" with his penknife, and when it is quite ready for use, shooting the old one from his mouth, as from a pop-gun, and clapping the new one in its place.

I was surprised to observe that even steady old chewers of great experience are not always good marksmen, which has rather inclined me to doubt that general proficiency with the rifle, of which we have heard so much in England. Several gentlemen called upon me who, in the course of conversation, frequently missed the spittoon at five paces; and one (but he was certainly short-sighted) mistook the closed sash for the open window, at three. On another occasion, when I dined out, and was sitting with two ladies and some gentlemen round a fire before dinner, one of the company fell short of the fireplace six distinct times. I am disposed to think, however, that this was occasioned by his not aiming at that object; as there was a white marble hearth before the fender, which was more convenient, and may have suited his purpose better.

The Patent Office at Washington furnishes an extraordinary example of American enterprise and ingenuity; for the immense number of models it contains are the accumulated inventions

of only five years; the whole of the previous [illegible] been destroyed by fire. The elegant structure [illegible] are arranged is one of design rather than [illegible] is but one side erected out of four, though [illegible] stopped. The Post Office is a very compact and [illegible] ful building. In one of the departments, [illegible] of rare and curious articles, are deposited the [illegible] have been made from time to time to the Am[illegible] dors at foreign courts by the various potentates to [illegible] were the accredited agents of the Republic: gifts [illegible] law they are not permitted to retain. I confess that I [illegible] upon this as a very painful exhibition, and [illegible] flattering to the national standard of honesty [illegible] That can scarcely be a high state of moral [illegible] gines a gentleman of repute and station likely to [illegible] in the discharge of his duty, by the present of a [illegible] a richly mounted sword, or an Eastern shawl, [illegible] Nation who reposes confidence in her appointed [illegible] likely to be better served than she who makes them [illegible] ject of such very mean and paltry suspicions.

At Georgetown, in the suburbs, there is a [illegible] delightfully situated, and, so far as I had an [illegible] seeing, well managed. Many persons who are [illegible] the Romish Church avail themselves, I believe, of [illegible] tutions, and of the advantageous opportunities they [illegible] the education of their children. The heights in this [illegible] bourhood, above the Potomac River, are very [illegible] are free, I should conceive, from some of the [illegible] Washington. The air, at that elevation, was quite [illegible] refreshing, when in the city it was burning hot.

The President's mansion is more like an English [illegible] both within and without, than any other kind of [illegible] ment with which I can compare it. The ornamental [illegible] about it has been laid out in garden walks: they are [illegible] and agreeable to the eye, though they have that [illegible] air of having been made yesterday, which is far from [illegible] able to the display of such beauties.

My first visit to this house was on the morning after [illegible] arrival, when I was carried thither by an official gentleman who was so kind as to charge himself with my presentation [illegible] the President.

We entered a large hall, and, having twice or thrice rung a bell which nobody answered, walked without further ceremony through the rooms on the ground floor, as divers other gentlemen (mostly with their hats on, and their hands in their pockets) were doing very leisurely. Some of these had ladies with them, to whom they were showing the premises; others were lounging on the chairs and sofas; others, in a perfect state of exhaustion from listlessness, were yawning drearily. The greater portion of this assemblage were rather asserting their supremacy than doing anything else, as they had no particular business there that anybody knew of. A few were closely viewing the movables, as if to make quite sure that the President (who was far from popular) had not made away with any of the furniture, or sold the fixtures for his private benefit.

After glancing at these loungers, who were scattered over a pretty drawing-room, opening upon a terrace which commanded a beautiful prospect of the river and the adjacent country, and who were sauntering, too, about a larger state room called the Eastern Drawing-room, we went up stairs into another chamber, where were certain visitors, waiting for audiences. At sight of my conductor a black in plain clothes and yellow slippers, who was gliding noiselessly about and whispering messages in the ears of the more impatient, made a sign of recognition, and glided off to announce him.

We had previously looked into another chamber fitted all round with a great bare wooden desk or counter, whereon lay piles of newspapers to which sundry gentlemen were referring. But there were no such means of beguiling the time in this apartment, which was as unpromising and tiresome as any waiting-room in one of our public establishments, or any physician's dining-room during his hours of consultation at home.

There were some fifteen or twenty persons in the room. One, a tall, wiry, muscular old man, from the West; sunburnt and swarthy; with a brown-white hat on his knees, and a giant umbrella resting between his legs; who sat bolt upright in his chair, frowning steadily at the carpet, and twitching the hard lines about his mouth, as if he had made up his mind "to fix" the President on what he had to say, and would n't bate him a grain. Another, a Kentucky farmer, six feet six in height, with his hat on, and his hands under his coat-tails, who leaned against the wall and kicked the floor with his heel, as though

he had Time's head under his shoe, and were [illegible] ing" him. A third, an oval-faced, [illegible] sleek black hair cropped close, and whiskers and [illegible] down to blue dots, who sucked the head of a [illegible] from time to time took it out of his mouth to [illegible] getting on. A fourth did nothing but [illegible] A [illegible] nothing but spit. And indeed all these [illegible] very persevering and energetic in this latter part. [illegible] bestowed their favours so abundantly upon the [illegible] take it for granted the Presidential [illegible] wages, or, to speak more genteelly, an ample [illegible] pensation:" which is the American word for salary, [illegible] case of all public servants.

We had not waited in this room many minutes [illegible] black messenger returned, and conducted us into [illegible] smaller dimensions, where, at a business-like [illegible] with papers, sat the President himself. He [illegible] worn and anxious, and well he might — being at war [illegible] everybody — but the expression of his face was [illegible] ant, and his manner was remarkably unaffected, [illegible] and agreeable. I thought that in his whole [illegible] demeanour he became his station singularly well.

Being advised that the sensible etiquette of the [illegible] court admitted of a traveller, like myself, [illegible] any impropriety, an invitation to dinner, which [illegible] me until I had concluded my arrangements for leaving Washington some days before that to which it referred, I returned to this house once. It was on the [illegible] those general assemblies which are held on [illegible] between the hours of nine and twelve o'clock, and are [illegible] rather oddly, Levees.

I went, with my wife, at about ten. There was a [illegible] dense crowd of carriages and people in the courtyard, [illegible] far as I could make out there were no very clear [illegible] for the taking up or setting down of company. [illegible] certainly no policemen to soothe startled horses, either [illegible] ing at their bridles or flourishing truncheons in their eyes [illegible] I am ready to make oath that no inoffensive persons [illegible] knocked violently on the head, or poked acutely in their [illegible] or stomachs, or brought to a standstill by any such [illegible] means, and then taken into custody for not moving [illegible]

there was no confusion or disorder. Our carriage reached the porch in its turn, without any blustering, swearing, shouting, jostling, or other disturbance; and we dismounted with as much ease and comfort as though we had been escorted by the whole Metropolitan Force from A to Z inclusive.

The suite of rooms on the ground floor were lighted up, and a military band was playing in the hall. In the smaller drawing-room, the centre of a circle of company, were the President and his daughter-in-law, who acted as the lady of the mansion; and a very interesting, graceful, and accomplished lady, too. One gentleman who stood among this group appeared to take upon himself the functions of a master of the ceremonies. I saw no other officers or attendants, and none were needed.

The great drawing-room, which I have already mentioned, and the other chambers on the ground floor, were crowded to excess. The company was not, in our sense of the term, select, for it comprehended persons of very many grades and classes; nor was there any great display of costly attire: indeed some of the costumes may have been, for aught I know, grotesque enough. But the decorum and propriety of behaviour which prevailed were unbroken by any rude or disagreeable incident; and every man, even among the miscellaneous crowd in the hall, who were admitted without any orders or tickets to look on, appeared to feel that he was a part of the Institution, and was responsible for its preserving a becoming character, and appearing to the best advantage.

That these visitors, too, whatever their station, were not without some refinement of taste and appreciation of intellectual gifts, and gratitude to those men who, by the peaceful exercise of great abilities, shed new charms and associations upon the homes of their countrymen, and elevate their character in other lands, was most earnestly testified by their reception of Washington Irving, my dear friend, who had recently been appointed Minister at the court of Spain, and who was among them that night, in his new character, for the first and last time before going abroad. I sincerely believe that, in all the madness of American politics, few public men would have been so earnestly, devotedly, and affectionately caressed, as this most charming writer; and I have seldom respected a public assembly more than I did this eager throng, when I saw them

turning with one mind from noisy orators and [illegible] and flocking with a generous and honest [illegible] man of quiet pursuits; proud in his [illegible] back upon their country; and grateful to [illegible] hearts for the store of graceful fancies he [illegible] them. Long may he dispense such treasures with [illegible] hand; and long may they remember him as worthy [illegible]

The term we had assigned for the duration [illegible] Washington was now at an end, and we were to [illegible] travel; for the railroad distances we had travelled [illegible] journeying among these older towns, are on that great continent looked upon as nothing.

I had at first intended going South — to [illegible] when I came to consider the length of time [illegible] would occupy, and the premature heat of the [illegible] even at Washington had been often very trying [illegible] moreover, in my own mind, the pain of living in the [illegible] contemplation of slavery against the more than [illegible] chances of my ever seeing it, in the time I had to [illegible] stripped of the disguises in which it would certainly be [illegible] and so adding any item to the host of facts already [illegible] together on the subject, I began to listen to [illegible] which had often been present to me at home in England when I little thought of ever being here, and to dream [illegible] cities growing up, like palaces in fairy tales, around the [illegible] and forests of the West.

The advice I received in most quarters when I began to yield to my desire of travelling towards that part of the [illegible] pass was, according to custom, authoritatively cheerless and [illegible] panion being threatened with more perils, dangers, and hardships than I can remember or would catalogue if I could, of which it will be sufficient to remark that bears, steamboats and breakings-down in coaches were among the least. But having a western route sketched out for me by the best and kindest authority to which I could have resorted, and putting no great faith in these discouragements, I soon determined on my plan of action.

This was to travel south, only to Richmond, in Virginia, and then to turn, and shape our course for the Far West whither I beseech the reader's company, in a new chapter

CHAPTER IX

A NIGHT STEAMER ON THE POTOMAC RIVER. VIRGINIA ROAD, AND A BLACK DRIVER. RICHMOND. BALTIMORE. THE HARRISBURG MAIL, AND A GLIMPSE OF THE CITY. A CANAL BOAT.

We were to proceed in the first instance by steamboat; and as it is usual to sleep on board, in consequence of the starting-hour being four o'clock in the morning, we went down to where she lay, at that very uncomfortable time for such expeditions when slippers are most valuable, and a familiar bed, in the perspective of an hour or two, looks uncommonly pleasant.

It is ten o'clock at night — say half-past ten — moonlight, warm, and dull enough. The steamer (not unlike a child's Noah's ark in form, with the machinery on the top of the roof) is riding lazily up and down, and bumping clumsily against the wooden pier, as the ripple of the river trifles with its unwieldly carcase. The wharf is some distance from the city. There is nobody down here; and one or two dull lamps upon the steamer's decks are the only signs of life remaining, when our coach has driven away. As soon as our footsteps are heard upon the planks, a fat negress, particularly favoured by nature in respect of bustle, emerges from some dark stairs, and marshals my wife towards the ladies' cabin, to which retreat she goes, followed by a mighty bale of cloaks and great-coats. I valiantly resolve not to go to bed at all, but to walk up and down the pier till morning.

I begin my promenade — thinking of all kinds of distant things and persons, and of nothing near — and pace up and down for half an hour. Then I go on board again; and getting into the light of one of the lamps, look at my watch and think it must have stopped; and wonder what has become of the faithful secretary whom I brought along with me from Boston. He is supping with our late landlord (a Field Marshal, at least, no doubt) in honour of our departure, and may be two hours longer. I walk again, but it gets duller and

duller; the moon goes down; next June seems farther off in the dark, and the echoes of my footsteps make me nervous. It has turned cold, too; and walking up and down without any companion in such lonely circumstances is but poor amusement. So I break my staunch resolution, and think it may be, perhaps, as well to go to bed.

I go on board again; open the door of the gentleman's cabin; and walk in. Somehow or other — from its being so quiet, I suppose — I have taken it into my head that there is nobody there. To my horror and amazement it is full of sleepers in every stage, shape, attitude, and variety of slumber: in the berths, on the chairs, on the floors, on the tables, and particularly round the stove, my detested enemy. I take another step forward, and slip upon the shining face of a black steward, who lies rolled in a blanket on the floor. He jumps up, grins, half in pain and half in hospitality; whispers my own name in my ear; and groping among the sleepers, leads me to my berth. Standing beside it, I count these slumbering passengers, and get past forty. There is no use in going further, so I begin to undress. As the chairs are all occupied, and there is nothing else to put my clothes on, I deposit them upon the ground: not without soiling my hands, for it is in the same condition as the carpets in the Capitol, and from the same cause. Having but partially undressed, I clamber on my shelf, and hold the curtain open for a few minutes while I look round on all my fellow-travellers again. That done, I let it fall on them, and on the world; turn round; and go to sleep.

I wake, of course, when we get under weigh, for there is a good deal of noise. The day is then just breaking. Everybody wakes at the same time. Some are self-possessed directly, and some are much perplexed to make out where they are until they have rubbed their eyes and, leaning on one elbow, looked about them. Some yawn, some groan, nearly all spit, and a few get up. I am among the risers; for it is easy to feel, without going into the fresh air, that the atmosphere of the cabin is vile in the last degree. I huddle on my clothes, go down into the fore-cabin, get shaved by the barber, and wash myself. The washing and dressing apparatus for the passengers generally consists of two jack-towels, three small wooden basins, a keg of water and a ladle to serve it out with, six

square inches of looking-glass, two ditto ditto of yellow soap, a comb and brush for the head, and nothing for the teeth. Everybody uses the comb and brush, except myself. Everybody stares to see me using my own; and two or three gentlemen are strongly disposed to banter me on my prejudices, but don't. When I have made my toilet, I go upon the hurricane-deck, and set in for two hours of hard walking up and down. The sun is rising brilliantly; we are passing Mount Vernon, where Washington lies buried; the river is wide and rapid; and its banks are beautiful. All the glory and splendour of the day are coming on, and growing brighter every minute.

At eight o'clock we breakfast in the cabin where I passed the night, but the windows and doors are all thrown open, and now it is fresh enough. There is no hurry or greediness apparent in the despatch of the meal. It is longer than a travelling breakfast with us; more orderly; and more polite.

Soon after nine o'clock we come to Potomac Creek, where we are to land; and then comes the oddest part of the journey. Seven stage-coaches are preparing to carry us on. Some of them are ready, some of them are not ready. Some of the drivers are blacks, some whites. There are four horses to each coach, and all the horses, harnessed or unharnessed, are there. The passengers are getting out of the steamboat, and into the coaches; the luggage is being transferred in noisy wheelbarrows; the horses are frightened, and impatient to start; the black drivers are chattering to them like so many monkeys; and the white ones whooping like so many drovers, for the main thing to be done in all kinds of hostlering here is to make as much noise as possible. The coaches are something like the French coaches, but not nearly so good. In lieu of springs, they are hung on bands of the strongest leather. There is very little choice or difference between them; and they may be likened to the car portion of the swings at an English fair, roofed, put upon axle-trees and wheels, and curtained with painted canvas. They are covered with mud from the roof to the wheel-tire, and have never been cleaned since they were first built.

The tickets we have received on board the steamboat are marked No. 1, so we belong to coach No. 1. I throw my coat on the box, and hoist my wife and her maid into the inside. It has only one step, and that being about a yard from the

ground is usually approached by a chair: when there is no chair, ladies trust in Providence. The coach holds nine inside, having a seat across from door to door, where we in England put our legs; so that there is only one feat more difficult in the performance than getting in, and that is, getting out again. There is only one outside passenger, and he sits upon the box. As I am that one, I climb up; and while they are strapping the luggage on the roof, and heaping it into a kind of tray behind, have a good opportunity of looking at the driver.

He is a negro — very black, indeed. He is dressed in a coarse pepper-and-salt suit, excessively patched and darned (particularly at the knees), grey stockings, enormous unblacked high-low shoes, and very short trousers. He has two odd gloves: one of parti-coloured worsted, and one of leather. He has a very short whip, broken in the middle and bandaged up with string. And yet he wears a low-crowned, broad-brimmed, black hat: faintly shadowing forth a kind of insane imitation of an English coachman! But somebody in authority cries "Go ahead!" as I am making these observations. The mail takes the lead in a four-horse waggon, and all the coaches follow in procession, headed by No. 1.

By the way, whenever an Englishman would cry "All right!" an American cries "Go ahead!" which is somewhat expressive of the national character of the two countries.

The first half mile of the road is over bridges made of loose planks laid across two parallel poles, which tilt up as the wheels roll over them; and IN the river. The river has a clayey bottom and is full of holes, so that half a horse is constantly disappearing unexpectedly, and can't be found again for some time.

But we get past even this, and come to the road itself, which is a series of alternate swamps and gravel-pits. A tremendous place is close before us, the black driver rolls his eyes, screws his mouth up very round, and looks straight between the two leaders, as if he were saying to himself, "We have done this often before, but now I think we shall have a crash." He takes a rein in each hand; jerks and pulls at both; and dances on the splashboard with both feet (keeping his seat, of course) like the late lamented Ducrow on two of his fiery coursers. We come to the spot, sink down in

mire nearly to the coach windows, tilt on one side at an angle of forty-five degrees, and stick there. The insides scream dismally; the coach stops; the horses flounder; all the other six coaches stop; and their four and twenty horses flounder likewise: but merely for company, and in sympathy with ours. Then the following circumstances occur.

BLACK DRIVER (to the horses). "Hi!"

Nothing happens. Insides scream again.

BLACK DRIVER (to the horses). "Ho!"

Horses plunge, and splash the black driver.

GENTLEMAN INSIDE (looking out). "Why, what on airth —"

Gentleman receives a variety of splashes and draws his head in again, without finishing his question or waiting for an answer.

BLACK DRIVER (still to the horses). "Jiddy! Jiddy!"

Horses pull violently, drag the coach out of the hole, and draw it up a bank, so steep that the black driver's legs fly up into the air, and he goes back among the luggage on the roof. But he immediately recovers himself, and cries (still to the horses): —

"Pill!"

No effect. On the contrary, the coach begins to roll back upon No. 2, which rolls back upon No. 3, which rolls back upon No. 4, and so on, until No. 7 is heard to curse and swear, nearly a quarter of a mile behind.

BLACK DRIVER (louder than before). "Pill!"

Horses make another struggle to get up the bank, and again the coach rolls backward.

BLACK DRIVER (louder than before). "Pe-e-e-ill!"

Horses make a desperate struggle.

BLACK DRIVER (recovering spirits). "Hi, Jiddy, Jiddy, Pill!"

Horses make another effort.

BLACK DRIVER (with great vigour). "Ally Loo! Hi. Jiddy, Jiddy. Pill. Ally Loo!"

Horses almost do it.

BLACK DRIVER (with his eyes starting out of his head). "Lee, den, Lee, dere. Hi. Jiddy, Jiddy. Pill. Ally Loo. Lee-e-e-e-e!"

They run up the bank, and go down again on the other side

at a fearful pace. It is impossible to stop them, and at the bottom there is a deep hollow, full of water. The coach rolls frightfully. The insides scream. The mud and water fly about us. The black driver dances like a madman. Suddenly we are all right by some extraordinary means, and stop to breathe.

A black friend of the black driver is sitting on a fence. The black driver recognises him by twirling his head round and round like a harlequin, rolling his eyes, shrugging his shoulders, and grinning from ear to ear. He stops short, turns to me, and says:—

"We shall get you through, sah, like a fiddle, and hope a please you when we get you through, sah. Old 'ooman at home, sah," chuckling very much. "Outside gentleman, sah, he often remember old 'ooman at home, sah," grinning again.

"Ay, ay, we'll take care of the old woman. Don't be afraid."

The black driver grins again, but there is another hole, and beyond that, another bank, close before us. So he stops short: cries (to the horses again) "Easy. Easy den. Ease. Steady. Hi. Jiddy. Pill. Ally. Loo," but never "Lee!" until we are reduced to the very last extremity, and are in the midst of difficulties, extrication from which appears to be all but impossible.

And so we do the ten miles or thereabouts in two hours and a half; breaking no bones, though bruising a great many; and in short getting through the distance "like a fiddle."

This singular kind of coaching terminates at Fredericksburg, whence there is a railway to Richmond. The tract of country through which it takes its course was once productive; but the soil has been exhausted by the system of employing a great amount of slave labour in forcing crops, without strengthening the land; and it is now little better than a sandy desert overgrown with trees. Dreary and uninteresting as its aspect is, I was glad to the heart to find anything on which one of the curses of this horrible institution has fallen; and had greater pleasure in contemplating the withered ground, than the richest and most thriving cultivation in the same place could possibly have afforded me.

In this district, as in all others where slavery sits brooding (I have frequently heard this admitted, even by those who a-

its warmest advocates), there is an air of ruin and decay abroad, which is inseparable from the system. The barns and outhouses are mouldering away; the sheds are patched and half roofless; the log cabins (built in Virginia with external chimneys made of clay or wood) are squalid in the last degree. There is no look of decent comfort anywhere. The miserable stations by the railway side; the great wild woodyards, whence the engine is supplied with fuel; the negro children rolling on the ground before the cabin doors, with dogs and pigs; the biped beasts of burden slinking past, — gloom and dejection are upon them all.

In the negro car belonging to the train in which we made this journey were a mother and her children who had just been purchased; the husband and father being left behind with their old owner. The children cried the whole way, and the mother was misery's picture. The champion of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness who had bought them rode in the same train; and every time we stopped, got down to see that they were safe. The black in Sinbad's Travels, with one eye in the middle of his forehead which shone like a burning coal, was nature's aristocrat compared with this white gentleman.

It was between six and seven o'clock in the evening when we drove to the hotel, in front of which, and on the top of the broad flight of steps leading to the door, two or three citizens were balancing themselves on rocking-chairs and smoking cigars. We found it a very large and elegant establishment, and were as well entertained as travellers need desire to be. The climate being a thirsty one, there was never, at any hour of the day, a scarcity of loungers in the spacious bar, or a cessation of the mixing of cool liquors; but they were a merrier people here, and had musical instruments playing to them o' nights, which it was a treat to hear again.

The next day, and the next, we rode and walked about the town, which is delightfully situated on eight hills, overhanging James River; a sparkling stream, studded here and there with bright islands, or brawling over broken rocks. Although it was yet but the middle of March, the weather in this southern temperature was extremely warm; the peach trees and magnolias were in full bloom; and the trees were green. In a low ground among the hills is a valley known as "Bloody

Run," from a terrible conflict with the Indians which once occurred there. It is a good place for such a struggle, and, like every other spot I saw associated with any legend of that wild people now so rapidly fading from the earth, interested me very much.

The city is the seat of the local parliament of Virginia; and in its shady legislative halls, some orators were drowsily holding forth to the hot noon day. By dint of constant repetition, however, these constitutional sights had very little more interest for me than so many parochial vestries; and I was glad to exchange this one for a lounge in a well-arranged public library of some ten thousand volumes, and a visit to a tobacco manufactory, where the workmen were all slaves.

I saw in this place the whole process of picking, rolling, pressing, drying, packing in casks, and branding. All the tobacco thus dealt with was in course of manufacture for chewing; and one would have supposed there was enough in that one storehouse to have filled even the comprehensive jaws of America. In this form, the weed looks like the oilcake on which we fatten cattle; and even without reference to its consequences, is sufficiently uninviting.

Many of the workmen appeared to be strong men, and it is hardly necessary to add that they were all labouring quietly, then. After two o'clock in the day, they are allowed to sing, a certain number at a time. The hour striking while I was there, some twenty sang a hymn in parts, and sang it by no means ill; pursuing their work meanwhile. A bell rang as I was about to leave, and they all poured forth into a building on the opposite side of the street to dinner. I said several times that I should like to see them at their meal; but as the gentleman to whom I mentioned this desire appeared to be suddenly taken rather deaf, I did not pursue the request. Of their appearance I shall have something to say presently.

On the following day, I visited a plantation or farm, of about twelve hundred acres, on the opposite bank of the river. Here again, although I went down with the owner of the estate, to "the quarter," as that part of it in which the slaves live is called, I was not invited to enter into any of their huts. All I saw of them was that they were very crazy, wretched cabins, near to which groups of half-naked children basked in the sun, or wallowed on the dusty ground. But I

believe that this gentleman is a considerate and excellent master, who inherited his fifty slaves, and is neither a buyer nor a seller of human stock; and I am sure, from my own observation and conviction, that he is a kind-hearted, worthy man.

The planter's house was an airy rustic dwelling, that brought Defoe's description of such places strongly to my recollection. The day was very warm, but the blinds being all closed, and the windows and doors set wide open, a shady coolness rustled through the rooms, which was exquisitely refreshing after the glare and heat without. Before the windows was an open piazza, where, in what they call the hot weather, — whatever that may be, — they sling hammocks, and drink and doze luxuriously. I do not know how their cool refections may taste within the hammocks, but, having experience, I can report that, out of them, the mounds of ices and the bowls of mint-julep and sherry-cobbler they make in these latitudes are refreshments never to be thought of afterwards, in summer, by those who would preserve contented minds.

There are two bridges across the river: one belongs to the railroad, and the other, which is a very crazy affair, is the private property of some old lady in the neighbourhood, who levies tolls upon the town's people. Crossing this bridge, on my way back, I saw a notice painted on the gate, cautioning all persons to drive slowly, under a penalty, if the offender were a white man, of five dollars; if a negro, fifteen stripes.

The same decay and gloom that overhang the way by which it is approached hover above the town of Richmond. There are pretty villas and cheerful houses in its streets, and Nature smiles upon the country round; but jostling its handsome residences, like slavery itself going hand in hand with many lofty virtues, are deplorable tenements, fences unrepaired, walls crumbling into ruinous heaps. Hinting gloomily at things below the surface, these, and many other tokens of the same description, force themselves upon the notice, and are remembered with depressing influence, when livelier features are forgotten.

To those who are happily unaccustomed to them, the countenances in the streets, and labouring-places, too, are shocking. All men who know that there are laws against instructing slaves, of which the pains and penalties greatly exceed in their amount the fines imposed on those who maim and torture

them, must be prepared to find their faces very [illegible] scale of intellectual expression. But the dark [illegible] skin, but mind — which meets the stranger's eye at [illegible] turn; the brutalising and blotting out of all fairer [illegible] traced by Nature's hand; immeasurably outdo [illegible] That travelled creation of the great satirist's brain, [illegible] from living among horses, peered from a high [illegible] upon his own kind with trembling horror, was [illegible] repelled and daunted by the sight than those [illegible] some of these faces for the first time must surely be.

I left the last of them behind me in the [illegible] wretched drudge, who, after running to and fro [illegible] midnight, and moping in his stealthy winks of [illegible] stairs between whiles, was washing the dark pas[illegible] o'clock in the morning; and went upon my way [illegible] ful heart that I was not doomed to live where slavery was, [illegible] had never had my senses blunted to its wrongs and [illegible] a slave-rocked cradle.

It had been my intention to proceed by James River [illegible] Chesapeake Bay to Baltimore; but one of the steamboats [illegible] absent from her station through some accident, and [illegible] of conveyance being consequently rendered [illegible] returned to Washington by the way we had come [illegible] two constables on board the steamboat, in pursuit of [illegible] slaves); and halting there again for one night, went [illegible] timore next afternoon.

The most comfortable of all the hotels of which I [illegible] experience in the United States, and they were not a [illegible] Barnum's, in that city, where the English trav[illegible] curtains to his bed, for the first and probably the last [illegible] America (this is a disinterested remark, for I never [illegible] and where he will be likely to have enough water for [illegible] himself, which is not at all a common case.

This capital of the State of Maryland is a bust[illegible] town, with a great deal of traffic of various kinds, [illegible] ticular of water commerce. That portion of the town [illegible] it most favours is none of the cleanest, it is true, but [illegible] upper part is of a very different character, and has [illegible] agreeable streets and public buildings. The Wash[illegible] Monument, which is a handsome pillar with a statue [illegible] summit, the Medical College, and the Battle Monument

memory of an engagement with the British at North Point, are the most conspicuous among them.

There is a very good prison in this city, and the State Penitentiary is also among its institutions. In this latter establishment there were two curious cases.

One was that of a young man, who had been tried for the murder of his father. The evidence was entirely circumstantial, and was very conflicting and doubtful; nor was it possible to assign any motive which could have tempted him to the commission of so tremendous a crime. He had been tried twice; and on the second occasion the jury felt so much hesitation in convicting him that they found a verdict of manslaughter, or murder in the second degree; which it could not possibly be, as there had, beyond all doubt, been no quarrel or provocation, and, if he were guilty at all, he was unquestionably guilty of murder in its broadest and worst signification.

The remarkable feature in the case was that, if the unfortunate deceased were not really murdered by this own son of his, he must have been murdered by his own brother. The evidence lay in a most remarkable manner between those two. On all the suspicious points, the dead man's brother was the witness; all the explanations for the prisoner (some of them extremely plausible) went, by construction and inference, to inculpate him as plotting to fix the guilt upon his nephew. It must have been one of them; and the jury had to decide between two sets of suspicions, almost equally unnatural, unaccountable, and strange.

The other case was that of a man who once went to a certain distiller's and stole a copper measure containing a quantity of liquor. He was pursued and taken with the property in his possession, and was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. On coming out of the jail, at the expiration of that term, he went back to the same distiller's and stole the same copper measure containing the same quantity of liquor. There was not the slightest reason to suppose that the man wished to return to prison: indeed, everything but the commission of the offence made directly against that assumption. There are only two ways of accounting for this extraordinary proceeding. One is that after undergoing so much for this copper measure he conceived he had established a sort of claim and right to it. The other that, by dint of long thinking about, it had become

a monomania with him, and had acquired a fascination which he found it impossible to resist, swelling from an Earthly Copper Gallon into an Ethereal Golden Vat.

After remaining here a couple of days I bound myself to a rigid adherence to the plan I had laid down so recently, and resolved to set forward on our western journey without any more delay. Accordingly, having reduced the luggage within the smallest possible compass (by sending back to New York, to be afterwards forwarded to us in Canada, so much of it as was not absolutely wanted); and having procured the necessary credentials to banking-houses on the way; and having moreover looked for two evenings at the setting sun, with as well-defined an idea of the country before us as if we had been going to travel into the very centre of that planet, we left Baltimore by another railway at half-past eight in the morning, and reached the town of York, some sixty miles off, by the early dinner-time of the hotel which was the starting-place of the four-horse coach, wherein we were to proceed to Harrisburg.

This conveyance, the box of which I was fortunate enough to secure, had come down to meet us at the railroad station, and was as muddy and cumbersome as usual. As more passengers were waiting for us at the inn-door, the coachman observed under his breath, in the usual self-communicative voice, looking the while at his mouldy harness as if it were to that he was addressing himself: —

"I expect we shall want *the big* coach."

I could not help wondering within myself what the size of this big coach might be, and how many persons it might be designed to hold; for the vehicle which was too small for our purpose was something larger than two English heavy night coaches, and might have been the twin brother of a French Diligence. My speculations were speedily set at rest, however, for, as soon as we had dined, there came rumbling up the street, shaking its sides like a corpulent giant, a kind of barge on wheels. After much blundering and backing, it stopped at the door; rolling heavily from side to side when its other motion had ceased, as if it had taken cold in its damp stable, and between that, and the having been required in its dropsical old age to move at any faster pace than a walk, were distressed by shortness of wind.

"If here ain't the Harrisburg mail at last, and dreadful

bright and smart to look at, too," cried an elderly gentleman in some excitement, "darn my mother!"

I don't know what the sensation of being darned may be, or whether a man's mother has a keener relish or disrelish of the process than anybody else; but if the endurance of this mysterious ceremony by the old lady in question had depended on the accuracy of her son's vision in respect to the abstract brightness and smartness of the Harrisburg mail, she would certainly have undergone its infliction. However, they booked twelve people inside; and the luggage (including such trifles as a large rocking-chair and a good-sized dining-table) being at length made fast upon the roof, we started off in great state.

At the door of another hotel, there was another passenger to be taken up.

"Any room, sir?" cries the new passenger to the coachman.

"Well, there 's room enough," replies the coachman, without getting down, or even looking at him.

"There ain't no room at all, sir," bawls a gentleman inside. Which another gentleman (also inside) confirms, by predicting that the attempt to introduce any more passengers "won't fit nohow."

The new passenger, without any expression of anxiety, looks into the coach, and then looks up at the coachman: "Now, how do you mean to fix it?" says he, after a pause; "for I *must* go."

The coachman employs himself in twisting the lash of his whip into a knot, and takes no more notice of the question; clearly signifying that it is anybody's business but his, and that the passengers would do well to fix it among themselves. In this state of things, matters seem to be approximating to a fix of another kind, when another inside passenger in a corner, who is nearly suffocated, cries faintly: —

"I 'll get out."

This is no matter of relief or self-congratulation to the driver, for his immovable philosophy is perfectly undisturbed by anything that happens in the coach. Of all things in the world, the coach would seem to be the very last upon his mind. The exchange is made, however, and then the passenger who has given up his seat makes a third upon the box, seating himself in what he calls the middle: that is, with half his person on my legs, and the other half on the driver's.

"Go ahead, cap'en," cries the colonel, who directs.

"Gŏ-lăng!" cries the cap'en to his company, the horses; and away we go.

We took up at a rural bar-room, after we had gone a few miles, an intoxicated gentleman, who climbed upon the roof among the luggage, and subsequently slipping off without hurting himself, was seen in the distant perspective reeling back to the grogshop where we had found him. We also parted with more of our freight at different times, so that, when we came to change horses, I was again alone outside.

The coachmen always change with the horses, and are usually as dirty as the coach. The first was dressed like a very shabby English baker; the second like a Russian peasant, for he wore a loose purple camlet robe with a fur collar, tied round his waist with a parti-coloured worsted sash; grey trousers; light blue gloves; and a cap of bearskin. It had by this time come on to rain very heavily, and there was a cold damp mist besides which penetrated to the skin. I was very glad to take advantage of a stoppage and get down to stretch my legs, shake the water off my great-coat, and swallow the usual anti-temperance recipe for keeping out the cold.

When I mounted to my seat again, I observed a new parcel lying on the coach roof, which I took to be a rather large fiddle in a brown bag. In the course of a few miles, however, I discovered that it had a glazed cap at one end and a pair of muddy shoes at the other; and further observation demonstrated it to be a small boy in a snuff-coloured coat, with his arms quite pinioned to his sides, by deep forcing into his pockets. He was, I presume, a relative or friend of the coachman's, as he lay atop of the luggage with his face towards the rain; and except when a change of position brought his shoes in contact with my hat, he appeared to be asleep. At last, on some occasion of our stopping, this thing slowly upreared itself to the height of three feet six, and, fixing its eyes on me, observed in piping accents, with a complaisant yawn, half quenched in an obliging air of friendly patronage, "Well now, stranger, I guess you find this a'most like an English arternoon, hey?"

The scenery which had been tame enough at first was, for the last ten or twelve miles, beautiful. Our road wound through the pleasant valley of the Susquehanna; the river, dotted with innumerable green islands, lay upon our right; and

on the left, a steep ascent, craggy with broken rock, and dark with pine-trees. The mist, wreathing itself into a hundred fantastic shapes, moved solemnly upon the water; and the gloom of evening gave to all an air of mystery and silence which greatly enhanced its natural interest.

We crossed this river by a wooden bridge, roofed and covered in on all sides, and nearly a mile in length. It was profoundly dark; perplexed with great beams, crossing and recrossing it at every possible angle; and through the broad chinks and crevices in the floor, the rapid river gleamed, far down below, like a legion of eyes. We had no lamps; and as the horses stumbled and floundered through this place, towards the distant speck of dying light, it seemed interminable. I really could not at first persuade myself as we rumbled heavily on, filling the bridge with hollow noises, and I held down my head to save it from the rafters above, but that I was in a painful dream; for I have often dreamed of toiling through such places, and as often argued, even at the time, "this cannot be reality."

At length, however, we emerged upon the streets of Harrisburg, whose feeble lights, reflected dismally from the wet ground, did not shine out upon a very cheerful city. We were soon established in a snug hotel, which, though smaller and far less splendid than many we put up at, is raised above them all in my remembrance, by having for its landlord the most obliging, considerate, and gentlemanly person I ever had to deal with.

As we were not to proceed upon our journey until the afternoon, I walked out, after breakfast the next morning, to look about me; and was duly shown a model prison on the solitary system, just erected, and as yet without an inmate; the trunk of an old tree to which Harris, the first settler here (afterwards buried under it), was tied by hostile Indians, with his funeral pile about him, when he was saved by the timely appearance of a friendly party on the opposite shore of the river; the local legislature (for there was another of those bodies here, again, in full debate); and the other curiosities of the town.

I was very much interested in looking over a number of treaties made from time to time with the poor Indians, signed by the different chiefs at the period of their ratification, and preserved in the office of the Secretary to the Commonwealth. These signatures, traced of course by their own hands, are rough

drawings of the creatures or weapons they were called after. Thus, the Great Turtle makes a crooked pen-and-ink outline of a great turtle; the Buffalo sketches a buffalo; the War Hatchet sets a rough image of that weapon for his mark. So with the Arrow, the Fish, the Scalp, the Big Canoe, and all of them.

I could not but think — as I looked at these feeble and tremulous productions of hands which could draw the longest arrow to the head in a stout elk-horn bow, or split a bead or feather with a rifle-ball — of Crabbe's musings over the Parish Register, and the irregular scratches made with a pen, by men who would plough a lengthy furrow straight from end to end. Nor could I help bestowing many sorrowful thoughts upon the simple warriors whose hands and hearts were set there, in all truth and honesty; and who only learned in course of time from white men how to break their faith, and quibble out of forms and bonds. I wondered, too, how many times the credulous Big Turtle, or trusting Little Hatchet, had put his mark to treaties which were falsely read to him; and had signed away, he knew not what, until it went and cast him loose upon the new possessors of the land, a savage, indeed.

Our host announced, before our early dinner, that some members of the legislative body proposed to do us the honour of calling. He had kindly yielded up to us his wife's own little parlour, and when I begged that he would show them in, I saw him look with painful apprehension at its pretty carpet; though, being otherwise occupied at the time, the cause of his uneasiness did not occur to me.

It certainly would have been more pleasant to all parties concerned, and would not, I think, have compromised their independence in any material degree, if some of these gentlemen had not only yielded to the prejudice in favour of spittoons, but had abandoned themselves, for the moment, even to the conventional absurdity of pocket-handkerchiefs.

It still continued to rain heavily, and when we went down to the canal boat (for that was the mode of conveyance by which we were to proceed) after dinner, the weather was as unpromising and obstinately wet as one would desire to see. Nor was the sight of this canal boat, in which we were to spend three or four days, by any means a cheerful one; as it involved some uneasy speculations concerning the disposal of the passengers at night, and opened a wide field of inquiry touching the

other domestic arrangements of the establishment, which was sufficiently disconcerting.

However, there it was — a barge with a little house in it, viewed from the outside; and a caravan at a fair, viewed from within: the gentlemen being accommodated, as the spectators usually are, in one of those locomotive museums of penny wonders; and the ladies being partitioned off by a red curtain, after the manner of the dwarfs and giants in the same establishments, whose private lives are passed in rather close exclusiveness.

We sat here, looking silently at the row of little tables, which extended down both sides of the cabin, and listening to the rain as it dripped and pattered on the boat, and plashed with a dismal merriment in the water, until the arrival of the railway train, for whose final contribution to our stock of passengers our departure was alone deferred. It brought a great many boxes, which were bumped and tossed upon the roof, almost as painfully as if they had been deposited on one's own head, without the intervention of a porter's knot; and several damp gentlemen, whose clothes, on their drawing round the stove, began to steam again. No doubt it would have been a thought more comfortable if the driving rain, which now poured down more soakingly than ever, had admitted of a window being opened, or if our number had been something less than thirty; but there was scarcely time to think as much, when a train of three horses was attached to the tow-rope, the boy upon the leader smacked his whip, the rudder creaked and groaned complainingly, and we had begun our journey.

CHAPTER X

SOME FURTHER ACCOUNT OF THE CANAL BOAT, ITS DOMESTIC ECONOMY, AND ITS PASSENGERS. JOURNEY TO PITTSBURG ACROSS THE ALLEGHANY MOUNTAINS. PITTSBURG.

As it continued to rain most perseveringly, we all remained below: the damp gentlemen round the stove, gradually becoming mildewed by the action of the fire; and the dry gentlemen lying at full length upon the seats, or slumbering uneasily with their faces on the tables, or walking up and down the cabin, which it was barely possible for a man of the middle height to do, without making bald places on his head by scraping it against the roof. At about six o'clock, all the small tables were put together to form one long table, and everybody sat down to tea, coffee, bread, butter, salmon, shad, liver, steak, potatoes, pickles, ham, chops, black puddings, and sausages.

"Will you try," said my opposite neighbour, handing me a dish of potatoes, broken up in milk and butter — "will you try some of these fixings?"

There are few words which perform such various duties as this word "fix." It is the Caleb Quotem of the American vocabulary. You call upon a gentleman in a country town, and his help informs you that he is "fixing himself" just now, but will be down directly: by which you are to understand that he is dressing. You inquire on board a steamboat of a fellow-passenger whether breakfast will be ready soon, and he tells you he should think so, for when he was last below they were "fixing the tables:" in other words, laying the cloth. You beg a porter to collect your luggage, and he entreats you not to be uneasy, for he 'll "fix it presently;" and if you complain of indisposition, you are advised to have recourse to Doctor so and so, who will "fix you" in no time.

One night I ordered a bottle of mulled wine at an hotel where I was staying, and waited a long time for it; at length it was put upon the table with an apology from the landlord

that he feared it was n't "fixed properly." And I recollect once at a stage-coach dinner, overhearing a very stern gentleman demand of a waiter who presented him with a plate of underdone roast beef, "whether he called *that* fixing God Almighty's vittles."

There is no doubt that the meal, at which the invitation was tendered to me which has occasioned this digression, was disposed of somewhat ravenously; and that the gentlemen thrust the broad-bladed knives and the two-pronged forks further down their throats than I ever saw the same weapons go before, except in the hands of a skilful juggler; but no man sat down until the ladies were seated, or omitted any little act of politeness which could contribute to their comfort. Nor did I ever once on any occasion anywhere, during my rambles in America, see a woman exposed to the slightest act of rudeness, incivility, or even inattention.

By the time the meal was over, the rain which seemed to have worn itself out by coming down so fast was nearly over too, and it became feasible to go on deck; which was a great relief, notwithstanding its being a very small deck, and being rendered still smaller by the luggage, which was heaped together in the middle under a tarpaulin covering; leaving on either side a path so narrow that it became a science to walk to and fro without tumbling overboard into the canal. It was somewhat embarrassing at first, too, to have to duck nimbly every five minutes whenever the man at the helm cried "Bridge!" and sometimes, when the cry was "Low Bridge," to lie down nearly flat. But custom familiarises one to anything, and there were so many bridges that it took a very short time to get used to this.

As night came on and we drew in sight of the first range of hills, which are the outposts of the Alleghany mountains, the scenery, which had been uninteresting hitherto, became more bold and striking. The wet ground reeked and smoked after the heavy fall of rain; and the croaking of the frogs (whose noise in these parts is almost incredible) sounded as though a million of fairy teams with bells were travelling through the air and keeping pace with us. The night was cloudy yet, but moonlight too; and when we crossed the Susquehanna river — over which there is an extraordinary wooden bridge with two galleries one above the other, so that even there two boat-

teams meeting may pass without confusion — it was wild and grand.

I have mentioned my having been in some uncertainty and doubt at first relative to the sleeping arrangements on board this boat. I remained in the same vague state of mind until ten o'clock or thereabouts, when, going below, I found suspended on either side of the cabin three long tiers of hanging book-shelves, designed apparently for volumes of the small octavo size. Looking with greater attention at these contrivances (wondering to find such literary preparations in such a place), I descried on each shelf a sort of microscopic sheet and blanket: then I began dimly to comprehend that the passengers were the library, and that they were to be arranged, edge-wise, on these shelves till morning.

I was assisted to this conclusion by seeing some of them gathered round the master of the boat at one of the tables, drawing lots with all the anxieties and passions of gamesters depicted in their countenances; while others with small pieces of cardboard in their hands were groping among the shelves in search of numbers corresponding with those they had drawn. As soon as any gentleman found his number, he took possession of it by immediately undressing himself and crawling into bed. The rapidity with which an agitated gambler subsided into a snoring slumberer was one of the most singular effects I have ever witnessed. As to the ladies, they were already abed behind the red curtain, which was carefully drawn and pinned up the centre; though as every cough, or sneeze, or whisper, behind this curtain was perfectly audible before it, we had still a lively consciousness of their society.

The politeness of the person in authority had secured to me a shelf in a nook near this red curtain, in some degree removed from the great body of sleepers: to which place I retired with many acknowledgments to him for his attention. I found it, on after-measurement, just the width of an ordinary sheet of Bath post letter-paper; and I was at first in some uncertainty as to the best means of getting into it. But the shelf being a bottom one, I finally determined on lying upon the floor, rolling gently in, stopping immediately I touched the mattress, and remaining for the night with that side uppermost, whatever it might be. Luckily, I came upon my back at exactly the right moment. I was much alarmed, on looking upward, to see by the shape of

is half yard of sacking (which his weight had bent into an exceedingly tight bag) that there was a very heavy gentleman above me, whom the slender cords seemed quite incapable of holding; and I could not help reflecting upon the grief of my wife and family in the event of his coming down in the night. But as I could not have got up again without a severe bodily struggle, which might have alarmed the ladies; and as I had nowhere to go to, even if I had, I shut my eyes upon the danger, and remained there.

One of two remarkable circumstances is indisputably a fact, with reference to that class of society who travel in these boats. Either they carry their restlessness to such a pitch that they never sleep at all, or they expectorate in dreams, which would be a remarkable mingling of the real and ideal. All night long and every night on this canal, there was a perfect storm and tempest of spitting; and once my coat being in the very centre of a hurricane sustained by five gentlemen (which moved vertically, strictly carrying out Reid's Theory of the Law of Storms), I was fain the next morning to lay it on the deck, and rub it down with fair water before it was in a condition to be worn again.

Between five and six o'clock in the morning we got up, and some of us went on deck to give them an opportunity of taking the shelves down; while others, the morning being very cold, crowded round the rusty stove, cherishing the newly kindled fire, and filling the grate with those voluntary contributions of which they had been so liberal all night. The washing accommodations were primitive. There was a tin ladle chained to the deck, with which every gentleman who thought it necessary to cleanse himself (many were superior to this weakness) fished the dirty water out of the canal, and poured it into a tin basin, secured in like manner. There was also a jack-towel. And hanging up before a little looking-glass in the bar, in the immediate vicinity of the bread and cheese and biscuits, were a public comb and hair-brush.

At eight o'clock, the shelves being taken down and put away and the tables joined together, everybody sat down to the tea, coffee, bread, butter, salmon, shad, liver, steak, potatoes, pickles, ham, chops, black puddings, and sausages, all over again. Some were fond of compounding this variety, and having it all on their plates at once. As each gentleman got

through his own personal amount of tea, coffee, bread, salmon, shad, liver, steak, potatoes, pickles, ham, eggs, puddings, and sausages, he rose up and walked off when everybody had done with everything, the fragments were cleared away; and one of the waiters, appearing in the character of a barber, shaved such of the company as chose to be shaved, while the remainder looked on, or yawned over their newspapers. Dinner was breakfast again, with tea and coffee; and supper and breakfast were identical.

There was a man on board this boat with a sallow-coloured face, and a pepper-and-salt suit of clothes, who was the most inquisitive fellow that can possibly be imagined. He never spoke otherwise than interrogatively. He was embodied inquiry. Sitting down or standing still, or moving, walking the deck or taking his meals, there he was with a great note of interrogation in each eye, two more cocked ears, two more in his turned-up nose and chin, and half a dozen more about the corners of his mouth, and the largest one of all in his hair, which was brushed over his forehead in a flaxen clump. Every button in his clothes said, "Eh! What's that! Did you speak! Say that again, will you!" He was always wide awake, like the enchanted who drove her husband frantic; always restless, always asking for answers; perpetually seeking and never finding. I never was such a curious man.

I wore a fur great-coat at that time, and before we were clear of the wharf, he questioned me concerning it, as to price, and where I bought it, and when, and what fur it was, and what it weighed, and what it cost. Then he looked at my watch, and asked what *that* cost, and whether it was French watch, and where I got it, and how I got it, and whether I bought it or had it given me, and how it went, and where the keyhole was, and when I wound it, every day, every morning, and whether I ever forgot to wind it at all, and if I did, what then? Where had I been to last, and where was I going next, and where was I going after that, and had I seen the President, and what did he say, and what I say, and what did he say when I had said that? Eh? Well now do tell!

Finding that nothing would satisfy him, I evaded his questions after the first score or two, and in particular was

ignorance respecting the name of the fur whereof the coat was made. I am unable to say whether this was the reason, but that coat fascinated him ever afterwards; he usually kept close behind me as I walked, and moved as I moved, that he might look at it the better; and he frequently dived into narrow places after me at the risk of his life, that he might have the satisfaction of passing his hand up the back, and rubbing it the wrong way.

We had another odd specimen on board of a different kind. This was a thin-faced, spare-figured man of middle age and stature, dressed in a dusty drabbish-coloured suit, such as I never saw before. He was perfectly quiet during the first part of the journey: indeed, I don't remember having so much as seen him until he was brought out by circumstances, as great men often are. The conjunction of events which made him famous happened briefly thus.

The canal extends to the foot of the mountain, and there, of course, it stops; the passengers being conveyed across it by land carriage, and taken on afterwards by another canal boat, the counterpart of the first, which awaits them on the other side. There are two canal lines of passage-boats: one is called The Express, and one (a cheaper one) The Pioneer. The Pioneer gets first to the mountain, and waits for the Express people to come up; both sets of passengers being conveyed across it at the same time. We were the Express company; but when we had crossed the mountain, and had come to the second boat, the proprietors took it into their heads to draft all the Pioneers into it likewise, so that we were five and forty at least, and the accession of passengers was not at all of that kind which improved the prospect of sleeping at night. Our people grumbled at this, as people do in such cases; but suffered the boat to be towed off with the whole freight aboard nevertheless; and away we went down the canal. At home I should have protested lustily, but being a foreigner here, I held my peace. Not so this passenger. He cleft a path among the people on deck (we were nearly all on deck), and, without addressing anybody whomsoever, soliloquised as follows: —

"This may suit *you*, this may, but it don't suit *me*. This may be all very well with Down Easters, and men of Boston raising, but it won't suit my figure no how; and no two ways

about *that*; and so I tell you. Now! I'm [illegible] forests of the Mississippi, *I* am, and when the [illegible] me, it does shine — a little. It don't [illegible] the sun don't. No. I'm a brown forester, I a[illegible] Johnny Cake. There are no smooth skins [illegible] We're rough men there. Rather. If Down Easters [illegible] of Boston raising like this, I'm glad of it, but I [illegible] that raising nor of that breed. No. This [illegible] little fixing, *it* does. I'm the wrong sort of [illegible] am. They won't like me, *they* won't. This is [illegible] up, a little too mountainous, this is." At the end [illegible] of these short sentences he turned upon his heel [illegible] the other way; checking himself abruptly when he [illegible] another short sentence, and turning back again.

It is impossible for me to say what terri[illegible] hidden in the words of this brown forester, but I [illegible] the other passengers looked on in a sort of [illegible] and that presently the boat was put back to the wharf [illegible] many of the Pioneers as could be coaxed or [illegible] away were got rid of.

When we started again some of the boldest [illegible] made bold to say to the obvious occasion of this [illegible] in our prospects, "Much obliged to you, sir," [illegible] brown forester (waving his hand and still walking [illegible] down as before) replied, "No, you ain't. [illegible] my raising. You may act for yourselves, you may. I pinted out the way. Down Easters and Johnny Cakes follow if they please. I ain't a Johnny Cake, *I* ain't. I from the brown forests of the Mississippi, *I* am" — [illegible] as before. He was unanimously voted one of the [illegible] his bed at night — there is a great contest for the [illegible] consideration of his public services, and he had the [illegible] corner by the stove throughout the rest of the [illegible] I never could find out that he did anything except [illegible] nor did I hear him speak again until, in the midst of [illegible] and turmoil of getting the luggage ashore in the dark at [illegible] burg, I stumbled over him as he sat smoking a cigar [illegible] cabin steps, and heard him muttering to himself, with a [illegible] laugh of defiance, "I ain't a Johnny Cake, *I* ain't. I [illegible] the brown forests of the Mississippi, *I* am, damn[illegible]" I inclined to argue from this that he had never left [illegible]

but I could not make affidavit of that part of the story, if required to do so by my Queen and Country.

As we have not reached Pittsburg yet, however, in the order of our narrative, I may go on to remark that breakfast was perhaps the least desirable meal of the day, as, in addition to the many savoury odours arising from the eatables already mentioned, there were whiffs of gin, whiskey, brandy, and rum, from the little bar hard by, and a decided seasoning of stale tobacco. Many of the gentlemen passengers were far from particular in respect of their linen, which was in some cases as yellow as the little rivulets that had trickled from the corners of their mouths in chewing and dried there. Nor was the atmosphere quite free from zephyr whisperings of the thirty heads which had just been cleared away, and of which we were further and more pressingly reminded by the occasional appearance on the table-cloth of a kind of Game not mentioned in the Bill of Fare.

And yet despite these oddities — and even they had, for me at least, a humour of their own — there was much in this mode of travelling which I heartily enjoyed at the time, and look back upon with great pleasure. Even the running up, bare-necked, at five o'clock in the morning, from the tainted cabin to the dirty deck; scooping up the icy water, plunging one's head into it, and drawing it out, all fresh and glowing with the cold, was a good thing. The fast, brisk walk upon the towing-path, between that time and breakfast, when every vein and artery seemed to tingle with health; the exquisite beauty of the opening day when light came gleaming off from everything; the lazy motion of the boat when one lay idly on the deck, looking through, rather than at, the deep blue sky; the gliding on at night so noiselessly, past frowning hills, sullen with dark trees, and sometimes angry in one red burning spot high up, where unseen men lay crouching round a fire; the shining out of the bright stars, undisturbed by noise of wheels or steam or any other sound than the liquid rippling of the water as the boat went on, — all these were pure delights.

Then there were new settlements and detached log-cabins and frame-houses, full of interest for strangers from an old country: cabins with simple ovens, outside, made of clay; and lodgings for the pigs nearly as good as many of the human quarters; broken windows patched with worn-out hats, old

clothes, old boards, fragments of blankets and paper; and home-made dressers standing in the open air without the door, whereon was ranged the household store, not hard to count, of earthen jars and pots. The eye was pained to see the stumps of great trees thickly strewn in every field of wheat, and seldom to lose the eternal swamp and dull morass, with hundreds of rotten trunks and twisted branches steeped in its unwholesome water. It was quite sad and oppressive, to come upon great tracts where settlers had been burning down the trees and where their wounded bodies lay about like those of murdered creatures, while here and there some charred and blackened giant reared aloft two withered arms, and seemed to call down curses on his foes. Sometimes at night the way wound through some lonely gorge like a mountain pass in Scotland, shining and coldly glittering in the light of the moon, and so closed in by high steep hills all round that there seemed to be no egress save through the narrower path by which we had come, until one rugged hillside seemed to open, and, shutting out the moonlight as we passed into its gloomy throat, wrapped our new course in shade and darkness.

We had left Harrisburg on Friday. On Sunday morning we arrived at the foot of the mountain which is crossed by railroad. There are ten inclined planes: five *a*scending and five *de*scending; the carriages are dragged up the former and let slowly down the latter by means of stationary engines; the comparatively level spaces between being traversed, sometimes by horse and sometimes by engine power, as the case demands. Occasionally the rails are laid upon the extreme verge of a giddy precipice; and looking from the carriage window the traveller gazes sheer down, without a stone or scrap of fence between, into the mountain depths below. The journey is very carefully made, however, only two carriages travelling together; and while proper precautions are taken is not to be dreaded for its dangers.

It was very pretty travelling thus, at a rapid pace along the heights of the mountain in a keen wind, to look down into a valley full of light and softness; catching glimpses through the tree-tops of scattered cabins; children running to the doors: dogs bursting out to bark whom we could see without hearing: terrified pigs scampering homewards; families sitting out in their rude gardens; cows gazing upward with a stupid indiffer-

ence; men in their shirt-sleeves looking on at their unfinished houses, planning out to-morrow's work; and we riding onward high above them like a whirlwind. It was amusing, too, when we had dined and rattled down a steep pass, having no other moving power than the weight of the carriages themselves, to see the engine released, long after us, come buzzing down alone, like a great insect, its back of green and gold so shining in the sun that, if it had spread a pair of wings and soared away, no one would have had occasion as I fancied for the least surprise. But it stopped short of us in a very business-like manner when we reached the canal; and before we left the wharf, went panting up this hill again with the passengers who had waited our arrival for the means of traversing the road by which we had come.

On the Monday evening furnace fires and clanking hammers on the banks of the canal warned us that we approached the termination of this part of our journey. After going through another dreamy place — a long aqueduct across the Alleghany River, which was stranger than the bridge at Harrisburg, being a vast low wooden chamber full of water — we emerged upon that ugly confusion of backs of buildings and crazy galleries and stairs which always abuts on water, whether it be river, sea, canal, or ditch; and were at Pittsburg.

Pittsburg is like Birmingham in England; at least its townspeople say so. Setting aside the streets, the shops, the houses, wagons, factories, public buildings, and population, perhaps it may be. It certainly has a great quantity of smoke hanging about it, and is famous for its iron-works. Besides the prison to which I have already referred, this town contains a pretty arsenal and other institutions. It is very beautifully situated on the Alleghany River, over which there are two bridges; and the villas of the wealthier citizens sprinkled about the high grounds in the neighbourhood are pretty enough. We lodged at a most excellent hotel, and were admirably served. As usual it was full of boarders, was very large, and had a broad colonnade to every story of the house.

We tarried here three days. Our next point was Cincinnati; and as this was a steamboat journey, and western steamboats usually blow up one or two a week in the season, it was advisable to collect opinions in reference to the comparative safety of the vessels bound that way then lying in the river. One

called The Messenger was the best recommended. She had been advertised to start positively, every day for a fortnight or so, and had not gone yet, nor did her captain seem to have any very fixed intention on the subject. But this is the custom: for if the law were to bind down a free and independent citizen to keep his word with the public, what would become of the liberty of the subject? Besides, it is in the way of trade. And if passengers be decoyed in the way of trade, and people be inconvenienced in the way of trade, what man who is a sharp tradesman himself shall say, "We must put a stop to this?"

Impressed by the deep solemnity of the public announcement, I (being then ignorant of these usages) was for hurrying on board in a breathless state, immediately; but receiving private and confidential information that the boat would certainly not start until Friday, April the First, we made ourselves very comfortable in the mean while, and went on board at noon that day.

CHAPTER XI

FROM PITTSBURG TO CINCINNATI IN A WESTERN STEAMBOAT. CINCINNATI.

THE MESSENGER was one among a crowd of high-pressure steamboats, clustered together by the wharf-side, which, looked down upon from the rising ground that forms the landing-place, and backed by the lofty bank on the opposite side of the river, appeared no larger than so many floating models. She had some forty passengers on board, exclusive of the poorer persons on the lower deck; and in half an hour or less proceeded on her way.

We had for ourselves a tiny state-room with two berths in it, opening out of the ladies' cabin. There was, undoubtedly, something satisfactory in this "location," inasmuch as it was in the stern, and we had been a great many times very gravely recommended to keep as far aft as possible, "because the steamboats generally blew up forward." Nor was this an unnecessary caution, as the occurrence and circumstances of more than one such fatality during our stay sufficiently testified. Apart from this source of self-congratulation, it was an unspeakable relief to have any place, no matter how confined, where one could be alone; and as the row of little chambers of which this was one had each a second glass door besides that in the ladies' cabin, which opened on a narrow gallery outside the vessel, where the other passengers seldom came, and where one could sit in peace and gaze upon the shifting prospect, we took possession of our new quarters with much pleasure.

If the native packets I have already described be unlike anything we are in the habit of seeing on water, these western vessels are still more foreign to all the ideas we are accustomed to entertain of boats. I hardly know what to liken them to, or how to describe them.

In the first place they have no mast, cordage, tackle, rigging, or other such boat-like gear; nor have they anything in

their shape at all calculated to remind one of a boat's head, stern, sides, or keel. Except that they are in the water, and display a couple of paddle-boxes, they might be intended, for anything that appears to the contrary, to perform some unknown service, high and dry, upon a mountain top. There is no visible deck, even: nothing but a long, black, ugly roof, covered with burnt-out feathery sparks; above which tower two iron chimneys, and a hoarse escape valve, and a glass steerage-house. Then in order, as the eye descends towards the water, are the sides, and doors, and windows of the state-rooms, jumbled as oddly together as though they formed a small street, built by the varying tastes of a dozen men: the whole is supported on beams and pillars resting on a dirty barge, but a few inches above the water's edge; and in the narrow space between this upper structure and this barge's deck are the furnace fires and machinery, open at the sides to every wind that blows, and every storm of rain it drives along its path.

Passing one of these boats at night, and seeing the great body of fire exposed as I have just described, that rages and roars beneath the frail pile of painted wood; the machinery, not warded off or guarded in any way, but doing its work in the midst of the crowd of idlers and emigrants and children, who throng the lower deck; under the management, too, of reckless men whose acquaintance with its mysteries may have been of six months' standing, — one feels directly that the wonder is, not that there should be so many fatal accidents, but that any journey should be safely made.

Within there is one long narrow cabin the whole length of the boat, from which the state-rooms open on both sides. A small portion of it at the stern is partitioned off for the ladies; and the bar is at the opposite extreme. There is a long table down the centre, and at either end a stove. The washing apparatus is forward on the deck. It is a little better than on board the canal boat, but not much. In all modes of travelling, the American customs with reference to the means of personal cleanliness and wholesome ablution are extremely negligent and filthy; and I strongly incline to the belief that a considerable amount of illness is referable to this cause.

We are to be on board The Messenger three days, arriving at Cincinnati (barring accidents) on Monday morning. There are three meals a day. Breakfast at seven, dinner at half-past

twelve, supper about six. At each there are a great many small dishes and plates upon the table, with very little in them; so that, although there is every appearance of a mighty "spread," there is seldom really more than a joint, except for those who fancy slices of beet-root, shreds of dried beef, complicated entanglements of yellow pickle, maize, Indian corn, apple-sauce, and pumpkin.

Some people fancy all these little dainties together (and sweet preserves beside), by way of relish to their roast pig. They are generally those dyspeptic ladies and gentlemen who eat unheard-of quantities of hot corn bread (almost as good for the digestion as a kneaded pin-cushion) for breakfast and for supper. Those who do not observe this custom, and who help themselves several times instead, usually suck their knives and forks meditatively, until they have decided what to take next; then pull them out of their mouths; put them in the dish; help themselves; and fall to work again. At dinner there is nothing to drink upon the table but great jugs full of cold water. Nobody says anything at any meal to anybody. All the passengers are very dismal, and seem to have tremendous secrets weighing on their minds. There is no conversation, no laughter, no cheerfulness, no sociality, except in spitting; and that is done in silent fellowship round the stove when the meal is over. Every man sits down dull and languid; swallows his fare as if breakfasts, dinners, and suppers were necessities of nature never to be coupled with recreation or enjoyment; and having bolted his food in a gloomy silence bolts himself in the same state. But for these animal observances you might suppose the whole male portion of the company to be the melancholy ghosts of departed book-keepers, who had fallen dead at the desk: such is their weary air of business and calculation. Undertakers on duty would be sprightly beside them; and a collation of funeral baked meats, in comparison with these meals, would be a sparkling festivity.

The people are all alike, too. There is no diversity of character. They travel about on the same errands, say and do the same things in exactly the same manner, and follow in the same dull cheerless round. All down the long table, there is scarcely a man who is in anything different from his neighbour. It is quite a relief to have sitting opposite that little girl of fifteen with the loquacious chin, who, to do her justice, acts

up to it, and fully identifies nature's handwriting; for of all the small chatterboxes that ever invaded the repose of a drowsy ladies' cabin she is the first and foremost. The beautiful girl who sits a little beyond her — farther down the table there — married the young man with the dark whiskers who sits beyond *her*, only last month. They are going to settle in the very Far West, where he has lived four years, but where she has never been. They were both overturned in a stage-coach the other day (a bad omen anywhere else, where overturns are not so common), and his head, which bears the marks of a recent wound, is bound up still. She was hurt too at the same time, and lay insensible for some days; bright as her eyes are now.

Farther down still sits a man who is going some miles beyond their place of destination, to "improve" a newly discovered copper mine. He carries the village — that is to be — with him: a few frame cottages, and an apparatus for smelting the copper. He carries its people, too. They are partly American and partly Irish, and herd together on the lower deck; where they amused themselves last evening till the night was pretty far advanced by alternately firing off pistols and singing hymns.

They, and the very few who have been left at table twenty minutes, rise and go away. We do so, too; and passing through our little state-room, resume our seats in the quiet gallery without.

A fine broad river always, but in some parts much wider than in others; and then there is usually a green island, covered with trees, dividing it into two streams. Occasionally we stop for a few minutes, maybe to take in wood, maybe for passengers, at some small town or village (I ought to say city — every place is a city here); but the banks are for the most part deep solitudes, overgrown with trees, which hereabouts are already in leaf and very green. For miles and miles and miles, these solitudes are unbroken by any sign of human life or trace of human footstep; nor is anything seen to move about them but the blue jay whose colour is so bright, and yet so delicate, that it looks like a flying flower. At lengthened intervals a log-cabin, with its little space of cleared land about it, nestles under a rising ground, and sends its thread of blue smoke curling up into the sky. It stands in the corner of the

poor field of wheat, which is full of great unsightly stumps like earthy butchers'-blocks. Sometimes the ground is only just now cleared; the felled trees lying yet upon the soil, and the log-house only this morning begun. As we pass this clearing, the settler leans upon his axe or hammer, and looks wistfully at the people from the world. The children creep out of the temporary hut, which is like a gipsy tent upon the ground, and clap their hands and shout. The dog only glances round at us; and then looks up into his master's face again, as if he were rendered uneasy by any suspension of the common business, and had nothing more to do with pleasurers. And still there is the same eternal foreground. The river has washed away its banks, and stately trees have fallen down into the stream. Some have been there so long that they are mere dry grizzly skeletons. Some have just toppled over, and, having earth yet about their roots, are bathing their green heads in the river, and putting forth new shoots and branches. Some are almost sliding down as you look at them. And some were drowned so long ago that their bleached arms start out from the middle of the current, and seem to try to grasp the boat and drag it under water.

Through such a scene as this the unwieldy machine takes its hoarse sullen way; venting, at every revolution of the paddles, a loud high-pressure blast, enough, one would think, to waken up the host of Indians who lie buried in a great mound yonder: so old that mighty oaks and other forest trees have struck their roots into its earth, and so high that it is a hill, even among the hills that Nature planted round it. The very river, as though it shared one's feelings of compassion for the extinct tribes who lived so pleasantly here, in their blessed ignorance of white existence, hundreds of years ago, steals out of its way to ripple near this mound; and there are few places where the Ohio sparkles more brightly than in the Big Grave Creek.

All this I see as I sit in the little stern-gallery mentioned just now. Evening slowly steals upon the landscape, and changes it before me, when we stop to set some emigrants ashore.

Five men, as many women, and a little girl. All their worldly goods are a bag, a large chest, and an old chair — one old, high-backed, rush-bottomed chair — a solitary settler in itself. They are rowed ashore in the boat, while the vessel

stands a little off awaiting its return, the water [illegible] They are landed at the foot of a high bank, [illegible] which are a few log-cabins, attainable only [illegible] path. It is growing dusk; but the sun is [illegible] in the water and on some of the tree-tops, like [illegible]

The men get out of the boat first; help [illegible] out the bag, the chest, the chair; bid the [illegible] and shove the boat off for them. At the first [illegible] in the water, the oldest woman of the party [illegible] old chair, close to the water's edge, without [illegible] None of the others sit down, though the chest [illegible] for many seats. They all stand where they [illegible] stricken into stone; and look after the boat [illegible] quite still and silent: the old woman and her [illegible] centre; the bag and chest upon the shore [illegible] heeding them — all eyes fixed upon the boat. It [illegible] side, is made fast, the men jump on board, the [illegible] motion, and we go hoarsely on again. There [illegible] without the motion of a hand. I can see th[illegible] glass, when, in the distance and increasing dark[illegible] mere specks to the eye, lingering there still, the [illegible] the old chair, and all the rest about her, not [illegible] least degree. And thus I slowly lose them.

The night is dark, and we proceed within the [illegible] wooded bank which makes it darker. After [illegible] sombre maze of boughs for a long time, we [illegible] space where the tall trees are burning. The [illegible] branch and twig is expressed in a deep red [illegible] light wind stirs and ruffles it, they seem to vegetate [illegible] is such a sight as we read of in legends of [illegible] saying that it is sad to see these noble works wast[illegible] awfully alone, and to think how many years [illegible] before the magic that created them will rear their [illegible] ground again. But the time will come, and wh[illegible] changed ashes, the growth of centuries unborn has [illegible] roots, the restless men of distant ages will [illegible] unpeopled solitudes, and their fellows, in cities far away [illegible] slumber now, perhaps, beneath the rolling sea, [illegible] language strange to any ears in being now, but very [illegible] of primeval forests where the axe was never heard, and [illegible] the jungled ground was never trodden by a human foot.

Midnight and sleep blot out these scenes and thoughts; and when the morning shines again, it gilds the house-tops of a lovely city, before whose broad paved wharf the boat is moored, with other boats, and flags, and moving wheels, and hum of men around it; as though there were not a solitary or silent rood of ground within the compass of a thousand miles.

Cincinnati is a beautiful city: cheerful, thriving, and animated. I have not often seen a place that commends itself so favourably and pleasantly to a stranger at the first glance as this does: with its clean houses of red and white, its well-paved roads, and foot-ways of bright tile. Nor does it become less prepossessing on a closer acquaintance. The streets are broad and airy, the shops extremely good, the private residences remarkable for their elegance and neatness. There is something of invention and fancy in the varying styles of these latter erections, which, after the dull company of the steamboat, is perfectly delightful, as conveying an assurance that there are such qualities still in existence. The disposition to ornament these pretty villas and render them attractive leads to the culture of trees and flowers, and the laying out of well-kept gardens, the sight of which, to those who walk along the streets, is inexpressibly refreshing and agreeable. I was quite charmed with the appearance of the town, and its adjoining suburb of Mount Auburn; from which the city, lying in an amphitheatre of hills, forms a picture of remarkable beauty, and is seen to great advantage.

There happened to be a great Temperance Convention held here on the day after our arrival; and as the order of march brought the procession under the windows of the hotel in which we lodged, when they started in the morning, I had a good opportunity of seeing it. It comprised several thousand men, the members of various "Washington Auxiliary Temperance Societies;" and was marshalled by officers on horseback, who cantered briskly up and down the line, with scarves and ribbons of bright colours fluttering out behind them gaily. There were bands of music, too, and banners out of number; and it was a fresh, holiday-looking concourse altogether.

I was particularly pleased to see the Irishmen, who formed a distinct society among themselves, and mustered very strong with their green scarves, carrying their national Harp and their Portrait of Father Mathew, high above the people's heads.

They looked as jolly and good-humoured as ever; and working (here) the hardest for their living and doing any kind of sturdy labour that came in their way, were the most independent fellows there, I thought.

The banners were very well painted, and flaunted down the street famously. There was the smiting of the rock, and the gushing forth of the waters; and there was a temperate man with "considerable of a hatchet" (as the standard-bearer would probably have said), aiming a deadly blow at a serpent which was apparently about to spring upon him from the top of a barrel of spirits. But the chief feature of this part of the show was a huge allegorical device, borne among the ship-carpenters, on one side whereof the steamboat Alcohol was represented bursting her boiler and exploding with a great crash, while upon the other, the good ship Temperance sailed away with a fair wind, to the heart's content of the captain, crew, and passengers.

After going round the town, the procession repaired to a certain appointed place, where, as the printed programme set forth, it would be received by the children of the different free schools, "singing Temperance Songs." I was prevented from getting there in time to hear these Little Warblers, or to report upon this novel kind of vocal entertainment — novel, at least, to me; but I found, in a large open space, each society gathered round its own banners, and listening in silent attention to its own orator. The speeches, judging from the little I could hear of them, were certainly adapted to the occasion, as having that degree of relationship to cold water which wet blankets may claim; but the main thing was the conduct and appearance of the audience throughout the day; and that was admirable and full of promise.

Cincinnati is honourably famous for its free schools, of which it has so many that no person's child among its population can by possibility want the means of education, which are extended upon an average to four thousand pupils annually. I was only present in one of these establishments during the hours of instruction. In the boys' department, which was full of little urchins (varying in their ages, I should say, from six years old to ten or twelve), the master offered to institute an extemporary examination of the pupils in algebra: a proposal which, as I was by no means confident of my ability to detect

mistakes in that science, I declined with some alarm. In the girls' school, reading was proposed; and as I felt tolerably equal to that art, I expressed my willingness to hear a class. Books were distributed accordingly, and some half-dozen girls relieved each other in reading paragraphs from English history. But it seemed to be a dry compilation, infinitely above their powers; and when they had blundered through three or four dreary passages concerning the Treaty of Amiens, and other thrilling topics of the same nature (obviously without comprehending ten words), I expressed myself quite satisfied. It is very possible that they only mounted to this exalted stave in the Ladder of Learning for the astonishment of a visitor, and that at other times they keep upon its lower rounds; but I should have been much better pleased and satisfied if I had heard them exercised in simpler lessons, which they understood.

As in every other place I visited, the judges here were gentlemen of high character and attainments. I was in one of the courts for a few minutes, and found it like those to which I have already referred. A nuisance cause was trying; there were not many spectators; and the witnesses, counsel, and jury formed a sort of family circle, sufficiently jocose and snug.

The society with which I mingled was intelligent, courteous, and agreeable. The inhabitants of Cincinnati are proud of their city, as one of the most interesting in America, and with good reason: for beautiful and thriving as it is now, and containing, as it does, a population of fifty thousand souls, but two and fifty years have passed away since the ground on which it stands (bought at that time for a few dollars) was a wild wood, and its citizens were but a handful of dwellers in scattered log-huts upon the river's shore.

CHAPTER XII

FROM CINCINNATI TO LOUISVILLE IN ANOTHER WESTERN STEAMBOAT; AND FROM LOUISVILLE TO ST. LOUIS IN ANOTHER. ST. LOUIS.

LEAVING Cincinnati at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, we embarked for Louisville in the Pike steamboat, which, carrying the mails, was a packet of a much better class than that in which we had come from Pittsburg. As this passage does not occupy more than twelve or thirteen hours, we arranged to go ashore that night, not coveting the distinction of sleeping in a state-room, when it was possible to sleep anywhere else.

There chanced to be on board this boat, in addition to the usual dreary crowd of passengers, one Pitchlynn, a chief of the Choctaw tribe of Indians, who *sent in his card* to me, and with whom I had the pleasure of a long conversation.

He spoke English perfectly well, though he had not begun to learn the language, he told me, until he was a young man grown. He had read many books; and Scott's poetry appeared to have left a strong impression on his mind: especially the opening of The Lady of the Lake, and the great battle scene in Marmion, in which, no doubt from the congeniality of the subjects to his own pursuits and tastes, he had great interest and delight. He appeared to understand correctly all he had read: and whatever fiction had enlisted his sympathy in its belief had done so keenly and earnestly — I might almost say fiercely. He was dressed in our ordinary every-day costume, which hung about his fine figure loosely, and with indifferent grace. On my telling him that I regretted not to see him in his own attire, he threw up his right arm, for a moment, as though he were brandishing some heavy weapon, and answered, as he let it fall again, that his race were losing many things besides their dress, and would soon be seen upon the earth no more: but he wore it at home, he added proudly.

He told me that he had been away from his home, west of

the Mississippi, seventeen months, and was now returning. He had been chiefly at Washington on some negotiations pending between his Tribe and the Government: which were not settled yet (he said in a melancholy way), and he feared never would be; for what could a few poor Indians do, against such well-skilled men of business as the whites? He had no love for Washington; tired of towns and cities very soon; and longed for the Forest and the Prairie.

I asked him what he thought of Congress? He answered with a smile that it wanted dignity in an Indian's eyes.

He would very much like, he said, to see England before he died; and spoke with much interest about the great things to be seen there. When I told him of that chamber in the British Museum wherein are preserved household memorials of a race that ceased to be, thousands of years ago, he was very attentive, and it was not hard to see that he had a reference in his mind to the gradual fading away of his own people.

This led us to speak of Mr. Catlin's gallery, which he praised highly; observing that his own portrait was among the collection, and that all the likenesses were "elegant." Mr. Cooper, he said, had painted the Red Man well; and so would I, he knew, if I would go home with him and hunt buffaloes, which he was quite anxious I should do. When I told him that supposing I went, I should not be very likely to damage the buffaloes much, he took it as a great joke and laughed heartily.

He was a remarkably handsome man, some years past forty, I should judge; with long black hair, an aquiline nose, broad cheek bones, a sunburnt complexion, and a very bright, keen, dark, and piercing eye. There were but twenty thousand of the Choctaws left, he said, and their number was decreasing every day. A few of his brother chiefs had been obliged to become civilised, and to make themselves acquainted with what the whites knew, for it was their only chance of existence. But they were not many; and the rest were as they always had been. He dwelt on this; and said several times that, unless they tried to assimilate themselves to their conquerors, they must be swept away before the strides of civilised society.

When we shook hands at parting I told him he must come to England, as he longed to see the land so much; that I should hope to see him there one day; and that I could promise him he would be well received and kindly treated.

and perpetually going to market in an unlawful manner, they are the meekest people in any man's acquaintance: rather inclining to milk and vegetable diet, and bearing anything for a quiet life. So decidedly are amiability and mildness their characteristics that I confess I look upon that youth, who distinguished himself by the slaughter of these inoffensive persons, as a false-hearted brigand, who, pretending to philanthropic motives, was secretly influenced only by the wealth stored up within their castles and the hope of plunder. And I lean the more to this opinion from finding that even the historian of those exploits, with all his partiality for his hero, is fain to admit that the slaughtered monsters in question were of a very innocent and simple turn; extremely guileless and ready of belief; lending a credulous ear to the most improbable tales; suffering themselves to be easily entrapped into pits; and even (as in the case of the Welsh Giant), with an excess of the hospitable politeness of a landlord, ripping themselves open, rather than hint at the possibility of their guests being versed in the vagabond arts of sleight-of-hand and hocus-pocus.

The Kentucky Giant was but another illustration of the truth of this position. He had a weakness in the region of the knees, and a trustfulness in his long face, which appealed even to five feet nine for encouragement and support. He was only twenty-five years old, he said, and had grown recently, for it had been found necessary to make an addition to the legs of his inexpressibles. At fifteen he was a short boy, and in those days his English father and his Irish mother had rather snubbed him, as being too small of stature to sustain the credit of the family. He added that his health had not been good, though it was better now; but short people are not wanting who whisper that he drinks too hard.

I understand he drives a hackney-coach, though how he does it, unless he stands on the footboard behind, and lies along the roof upon his chest, with his chin in the box, it would be difficult to comprehend. He brought his gun with him as a curiosity. Christened "The Little Rifle," and displayed outside a shop window, it would make the fortune of any retail business in Holborn. When he had shown himself and talked a little while, he withdrew with his pocket instrument, and went bobbing down the cabin, among men of six feet high and upwards, like a lighthouse walking among lamp-posts.

Within a few minutes afterwards, we were out of the canal, and in the Ohio river again.

The arrangements of the boat were like those of The Messenger, and the passengers were of the same order of people. We fed at the same times, on the same kind of viands, in the same dull manner, and with the same observances. The company appeared to be oppressed by the same tremendous concealments, and had as little capacity of enjoyment or light-heartedness. I never in my life did see such listless, heavy dulness as brooded over these meals: the very recollection of it weighs me down, and makes me, for the moment, wretched. Reading and writing on my knee, in our little cabin, I really dreaded the coming of the hour that summoned us to table; and was as glad to escape from it again as if it had been a penance or a punishment. Healthy cheerfulness and good spirits forming a part of the banquet, I could soak my crusts in the fountain with Le Sage's strolling player, and revel in their glad enjoyment; but sitting down with so many fellow-animals to ward off thirst and hunger as a business; to empty each creature his Yahoo's trough as quickly as he can, and then slink sullenly away; to have these social sacraments stripped of everything but the mere greedy satisfaction of the natural cravings, goes so against the grain with me, that I seriously believe the recollection of these funeral feasts will be a waking nightmare to me all my life.

There was some relief in this boat, too, which there had not been in the other; for the captain (a blunt, good-natured fellow) had his handsome wife with him, who was disposed to be lively and agreeable, as were a few other lady passengers who had their seats about us at the same end of the table. But nothing could have made head against the depressing influence of the general body. There was a magnetism of dulness in them which would have beaten down the most facetious companion that the earth ever knew. A jest would have been a crime, and a smile would have faded into a grinning horror. Such deadly leaden people; such systematic, plodding, weary, insupportable heaviness; such a mass of animated indigestion in respect of all that was genial, jovial, frank, social, or hearty, never, sure, was brought together elsewhere since the world began.

Nor was the scenery, as we approached the junction of the

Ohio and Mississippi rivers, at all inspiriting in its influence. The trees were stunted in their growth; the banks were low and flat; the settlements and log-cabins fewer in number: their inhabitants more wan and wretched than any we had encountered yet. No songs of birds were in the air, no pleasant scents, no moving lights and shadows from swift passing clouds. Hour after hour, the changeless glare of the hot, unwinking sky shone upon the same monotonous objects. Hour after hour, the river rolled along, as wearily and slowly as the time itself.

At length, upon the morning of the third day, we arrived at a spot so much more desolate than any we had yet beheld that the forlornest places we had passed were, in comparison with it, full of interest. At the junction of the two rivers, on ground so flat and low and marshy that at certain seasons of the year it is inundated to the house-tops, lies a breeding-place of fever, ague, and death; vaunted in England as a mine of Golden Hope, and speculated in, on the faith of monstrous representations, to many people's ruin. A dismal swamp, on which the half-built houses rot away; cleared here and there for the space of a few yards; and teeming, then, with rank unwholesome vegetation, in whose baleful shade the wretched wanderers who are tempted hither droop, and die, and lay their bones; the hateful Mississippi circling and eddying before it, and turning off upon its southern course a slimy monster hideous to behold; a hotbed of disease, an ugly sepulchre, a grave uncheered by any gleam of promise; a place without one single quality, in earth or air or water, to commend it — such is this dismal Cairo.

But what words shall describe the Mississippi, great father of rivers, who (praise be to Heaven!) has no young children like him! An enormous ditch, sometimes two or three miles wide, running liquid mud, six miles an hour; its strong and frothy current choked and obstructed everywhere by huge logs and whole forest trees, now twining themselves together in great rafts, from the interstices of which a sedgy, lazy foam works up, to float upon the water's top; now rolling past like monstrous bodies, their tangled roots showing like matted hair; now glancing singly by like giant leeches; and now writhing round and round in the vortex of some small whirlpool like wounded snakes. The banks low, the trees dwarfish, the marshes swarming with frogs, the wretched cabins few and far apart, their

inmates hollow-cheeked and pale, the weather very hot, mosquitoes penetrating into every crack and crevice of the boat, mud and slime on everything — nothing pleasant in its aspect but the harmless lightning which flickers every night upon the dark horizon.

For two days we toiled up this foul stream, striking constantly against the floating timber, or stopping to avoid those more dangerous obstacles, the snags, or sawyers, which are the hidden trunks of trees that have their roots below the tide. When the nights are very dark, the look-out stationed in the head of the boat knows by the ripple of the water if any great impediment be near at hand, and rings a bell beside him, which is the signal for the engine to be stopped; but always in the night this bell has work to do, and after every ring there comes a blow which renders it no easy matter to remain in bed.

The decline of day here was very gorgeous; tingeing the firmament deeply with red and gold, up to the very keystone of the arch above us. As the sun went down behind the bank, the slightest blades of grass upon it seemed to become as distinctly visible as the arteries in the skeleton of a leaf, and when, as it slowly sank, the red and golden bars upon the water grew dimmer, and dimmer yet, as if they were sinking, too; and all the glowing colours of departing day paled, inch by inch, before the sombre night, the scene became a thousand times more lonesome and more dreary than before, and all its influences darkened with the sky.

We drank the muddy water of this river while we were upon it. It is considered wholesome by the natives, and is something more opaque than gruel. I have seen water like it at the filter-shops, but nowhere else.

On the fourth night after leaving Louisville, we reached St. Louis, and here I witnessed the conclusion of an incident, trifling enough in itself but very pleasant to see, which had interested me during the whole journey.

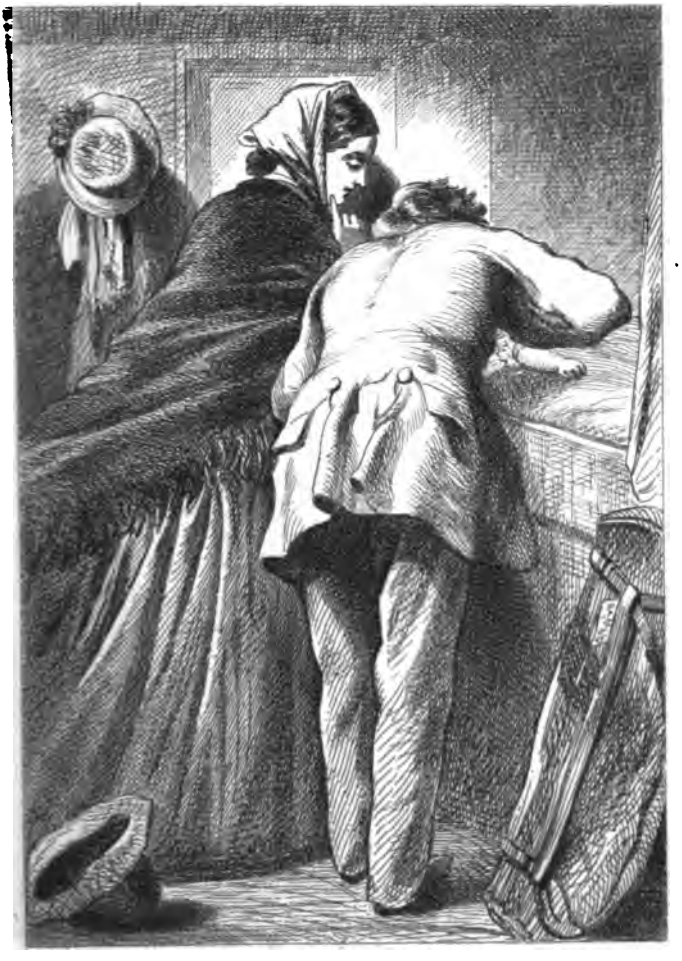
There was a little woman on board, with a little baby; and both little woman and little child were cheerful, good-looking, bright-eyed, and fair to see. The little woman had been passing a long time with her sick mother in New York, and had left her home in St. Louis, in that condition in which ladies who truly love their lords desire to be. The baby was born in her mother's house; and she had not seen her husband (to

whom she was now returning), for twelve months; having left him a month or two after their marriage.

Well, to be sure there never was a little woman so full of hope, and tenderness, and love, and anxiety, as this little woman was; and all day long she wondered whether "He" would be at the wharf; and whether "He" had got her letter; and whether, if she sent the baby ashore by somebody else, "He" would know it, meeting it in the street: which, seeing that he had never set eyes upon it in his life, was not very likely in the abstract, but was probable enough, to the young mother. She was such an artless little creature; and was in such a sunny, beaming, hopeful state; and let out all this matter clinging close about her heart, so freely, that all the other lady passengers entered into the spirit of it as much as she; and the captain (who heard all about it from his wife) was wondrous sly, I promise you; inquiring, every time we met at table, as in forgetfulness, whether she expected anybody to meet her at St. Louis, and whether she would want to go ashore the night we reached it (but he supposed she would n't), and cutting many other dry jokes of that nature. There was one little weazen, dried-apple-faced old woman, who took occasion to doubt the constancy of husbands in such circumstances of bereavement; and there was another lady (with a lap dog) old enough to moralise on the lightness of human affections, and yet not so old that she could help nursing the baby, now and then, or laughing with the rest, when the little woman called it by its father's name, and asked it all manner of fantastic questions concerning him in the joy of her heart.

It was something of a blow to the little woman that, when we were within twenty miles of our destination, it became clearly necessary to put this baby to bed. But she got over it with the same good-humour; tied a handkerchief round her head; and came out into the little gallery with the rest. Then such an oracle as she became in reference to the localities! and such facetiousness as was displayed by the married ladies! and such sympathy as was shown by the single ones! and such peals of laughter as the little woman herself (who would just as soon have cried) greeted every jest with!

At last, there were the lights of St. Louis, and here was the wharf, and those were the steps; and the little woman, covering her face with her hands, and laughing (or seeming to laugh)



more than ever, ran into her own cabin, and shut herself up. I have no doubt that, in the charming inconsistency of such excitement, she stopped her ears, lest she should hear "Him" asking for her: but I did not see her do it.

Then a great crowd of people rushed on board, though the boat was not yet made fast, but was wandering about, among the other boats, to find a landing-place; and everybody looked for the husband; and nobody saw him; when, in the midst of us all — Heaven knows how she ever got there — there was the little woman clinging with both arms tight round the neck of a fine, good-looking, sturdy young fellow! and in a moment afterwards, there she was again, actually clapping her little hands for joy, as she dragged him through the small door of her small cabin, to look at the baby as he lay asleep!

We went to a large hotel called the Planters' House: built like an English hospital, with long passages and bare walls, and skylights above the room doors for the free circulation of air. There were a great many boarders in it; and as many lights sparkled and glistened from the windows down into the street below, when we drove up, as if it had been illuminated on some occasion of rejoicing. It is an excellent house, and the proprietors have most bountiful notions of providing the creature comforts. Dining alone with my wife in our own room one day, I counted fourteen dishes on the table at once.

In the old French portion of the town, the thoroughfares are narrow and crooked, and some of the houses are very quaint and picturesque; being built of wood, with tumble-down galleries before the windows, approachable by stairs or rather ladders from the street. There are queer little barbers' shops and drinking houses, too, in this quarter; and abundance of crazy old tenements with blinking casements, such as may be seen in Flanders. Some of these ancient habitations, with high garret gable-windows perking into the roofs, have a kind of French shrug about them; and being lop-sided with age, appear to hold their heads askew, besides, as if they were grimacing in astonishment at the American Improvements.

It is hardly necessary to say that these consist of wharves and warehouses, and new buildings in all directions; and of a great many vast plans which are still "progressing." Already, however, some very good houses, broad streets, and marble-

fronted shops have gone so far ahead as to be in a state of completion; and the town bids fair in a few years to extend considerably, though it is not likely ever to vie, in point of elegance or beauty, with Cincinnati.

The Roman Catholic religion, introduced here by the early French settlers, prevails extensively. Among the public institutions are a Jesuit College; a convent for "the Ladies of the Sacred Heart;" and a large chapel attached to the latter, which was in course of erection at the time of my visit, and was intended to be consecrated on the second of December in the next year. The architect of this building is one of the reverend fathers of the school, and the works proceed under his sole direction. The organ will be sent from Europe.

In addition to these establishments, there is a Roman Catholic cathedral, dedicated to St. Francis Xavier, and a hospital founded by the munificence of a deceased resident, who was a member of that church. It also sends missionaries from time to time among the Indian tribes.

The Unitarian church is represented, in this remote city, as in most other parts of America, by a gentleman of great worth and excellence. The poor have good reason to remember and bless it; for it befriends them, and aids the cause of rational education, without any sectarian or selfish view. It is liberal in all its actions; of kind construction, and full of benevolence.

There are three free schools already erected, and in full operation in this city. A fourth is building, and will soon be opened.

No man ever admits the unhealthiness of the place he lives in (unless he is going away from it), and I shall therefore have no doubt, be at issue with the inhabitants of St. Louis in questioning the perfect salubrity of its climate, and declaring that I think it must rather dispose to fever, at the summer and autumnal seasons. Just adding, that it teems with lies among great rivers, and has vast tracts of low, swampy land around it, I leave the reader to form his own opinion.

As I had a great desire to see a Prairie before turning my face from the farthest point of my wanderings; and as some gentlemen of the town had, in their hospitable consideration, undertaken to gratify me; a day was fixed, before my arrival

ure, for an expedition to the Looking-Glass Prairie, which is within thirty miles of the town. Deeming it possible that my readers may not object to know what kind of thing such a gipsy party may be at that distance from home, and among what sort of objects it moves, I will describe the jaunt in another chapter.

CHAPTER XIII

A JAUNT TO THE LOOKING-GLASS PRAIRIE AND BACK

I MAY premise that the word Prairie is vari[illegible] *paraaer*, *parearer*, and *paroarer*. The latter [illegible] nunciation is perhaps the most in favour.

We were fourteen in all, and all young men [illegible] singular though very natural feature in the [illegible] distant settlements that it is mainly composed of [illegible] persons in the prime of life, and has very few [illegible] among it. There were no ladies, the trip being a fa[illegible] and we were to start at five o'clock in the morn[illegible]

I was called at four that I might be certain [illegible] nobody waiting; and having got some bread a[illegible] breakfast, threw up the window and looked d[illegible] street, expecting to see the whole party busily a[illegible] preparations going on below. But as everyth[illegible] was quiet, and the street presented that hopeless aspect [illegible] five o'clock in the morning is familiar elsewhere, I [illegible] as well to go to bed again, and went accordingly.

I awoke again at seven o'clock, and by that ti[illegible] the [illegible] had assembled, and were gathered round one lig[illegible] carriage [illegible] a very stout axletree; one something on wheels like an [illegible] carrier's cart; one double phaeton of great ar[illegible] unearthly construction; one gig with a great h[illegible] and a broken head; and one rider on horseback wh[illegible] on before. I got into the first coach with three [illegible] the rest bestowed themselves in the other veh[illegible] baskets were made fast to the lightest, two large stone [illegible] wicker cases, technically known as demijohns, were [illegible] to the "least rowdy" of the party for safe keeping [illegible] procession moved off to the ferry-boat, in which it was to [illegible] the river bodily, men, horses, carriages, and all, as the ma[illegible] in these parts is.

We got over the river in due course, and mustered a

before a little wooden box on wheels, hove down all aslant in a morass, with "MERCHANT TAILOR" painted in very large letters over the door. Having settled the order of proceeding, and the road to be taken, we started off once more, and began to make our way through an ill-favoured Black Hollow called, less expressively, the American Bottom.

The previous day had been — not to say hot, for the term is weak and lukewarm in its power of conveying an idea of the temperature. The town had been on fire — in a blaze. But at night it had come on to rain in torrents, and all night long it had rained without cessation. We had a pair of very strong horses, but travelled at the rate of little more than a couple of miles an hour, through one unbroken slough of black mud and water. It had no variety but in depth. Now it was only half over the wheels, now it hid the axletree, and now the coach sank down in it almost to the windows. The air resounded in all directions with the loud chirping of the frogs, who, with the pigs (a coarse, ugly breed, as unwholesome looking as though they were the spontaneous growth of the country), had the whole scene to themselves. Here and there we passed a log-hut; but the wretched cabins were wide apart and thinly scattered, for though the soil is very rich in this place few people can exist in such a deadly atmosphere. On either side of the track, if it deserve the name, was the thick "bush;" and everywhere was stagnant, slimy, rotten, filthy water.

As it is the custom in these parts to give a horse a gallon or so of cold water whenever he is in a foam with heat, we halted for that purpose, at a log-inn in the wood, far removed from any other residence. It consisted of one room, bare-roofed and bare-walled, of course, with a loft above. The ministering priest was a swarthy young savage, in a shirt of cotton print like bed furniture, and a pair of ragged trousers. There were a couple of young boys, too, nearly naked, lying idly by the well; and they, and he, and *the* traveller at the inn, turned out to look at us.

The traveller was an old man with a grey grisly beard two inches long, a shaggy moustache of the same hue, and enormous eyebrows, which almost obscured his lazy, semi-drunken glance, as he stood regarding us with folded arms, poising himself alternately upon his toes and heels. On being

addressed by one of the party, he drew nearer, and rubbing his chin (which scraped under his horny hand like fresh gravel beneath a nailed shoe), that he was from Delaware, and had lately bought a farm "down there," pointing across the marshes where the stunted trees were thickest. He was "going," he added, to St. Louis, to fetch his family, whom he had left behind; but he seemed in no great hurry to bring on these incumbrances, for when we moved away, he loitered back into the cabin, and was plainly bent on stopping there so long as his money lasted. He was a great politician of course, and explained his opinions at some length to one of our company; but I only remember that he concluded with two sentiments, one of which was, Somebody for ever; and the other, Blast everybody else! which is by no means a bad abstract of the general creed in these matters.

When the horses were swollen out to about twice their natural dimensions (there seems to be an idea here, that this kind of inflation improves their going), we went forward again, through mud and mire, and damp, and festering heat, and brake and bush, attended always by the music of the frogs and pigs, until nearly noon, when we halted at a place called Belleville.

Belleville was a small collection of wooden houses, huddled together in the very heart of the bush and swamp. Many of them had singularly bright doors of red and yellow; for the place had been lately visited by a travelling painter, "who got along," as I was told, "by eating his way." The criminal court was sitting, and was at that moment trying some criminals for horse-stealing: with whom it would most likely go hard: for live stock of all kinds, being necessarily very much exposed in the woods, is held by the community in rather higher value than human life; and for this reason, juries generally make a point of finding all men indicted for cattle-stealing, guilty, whether or no.

The horses belonging to the bar, the judge, and witnesses, were tied to temporary racks set up roughly in the road; by which is to be understood, a forest path, nearly knee-deep in mud and slime.

There was an hotel in this place, which, like all hotels in America, had its large dining-room for the public table. It was an odd, shambling, low-roofed out-house, half

half kitchen, with a coarse brown canvas table-cloth, and tin sconces stuck against the walls, to hold candles at supper-time. The horseman had gone forward to have coffee and some eatables prepared, and they were by this time nearly ready. He had ordered "wheat-bread and chicken-fixings," in preference to "corn-bread and common doings." The latter kind of refection includes only pork and bacon. The former comprehends broiled ham, sausages, veal cutlets, steaks, and such other viands of that nature as may be supposed, by a tolerably wide poetical construction, "to fix" a chicken comfortably in the digestive organs of any lady or gentleman.

On one of the door-posts at this inn was a tin plate, whereon was inscribed in characters of gold "Doctor Crocus;" and on a sheet of paper pasted up by the side of this plate was a written announcement that Dr. Crocus would that evening deliver a lecture on Phrenology for the benefit of the Belleville public, at a charge for admission of so much a head.

Straying up stairs, during the preparation of the chicken-fixings, I happened to pass the doctor's chamber; and as the door stood wide open, and the room was empty, I made bold to peep in.

It was a bare, unfurnished, comfortless room, with an unframed portrait hanging up at the head of the bed; a likeness, I take it, of the doctor, for the forehead was fully displayed, and great stress was laid by the artist upon its phrenological developments. The bed itself was covered with an old patchwork counterpane. The room was destitute of carpet or of curtain. There was a damp fireplace without any stove, full of wood ashes; a chair, and a very small table; and on the last named piece of furniture was displayed, in grand array, the doctor's library, consisting of some half-dozen greasy old books.

Now it certainly looked about the last apartment on the whole earth out of which any man would be likely to get anything to do him good. But the door, as I have said, stood coaxingly open, and plainly said, in conjunction with the chair, the portrait, the table, and the books, "Walk in, gentlemen, walk in! Don't be ill, gentlemen, when you may be well in no time. Doctor Crocus is here, gentlemen, the celebrated Doctor Crocus! Doctor Crocus has come all this way to cure you, gentlemen. If you have n't heard of Doctor Crocus, it 's

your fault, gentlemen, who live a little way out of the world here, not Doctor Crocus's. Walk in, gentlemen, walk in!"

In the passage below, when I went down stairs again, was Doctor Crocus himself. A crowd had flocked in from the Court House, and a voice from among them called out to the landlord, "Colonel, introduce Doctor Crocus!"

"Mr. Dickens," says the colonel, "Doctor Crocus."

Upon which Doctor Crocus, who is a tall, fine-looking Scotchman, but rather fierce and warlike in appearance for a professor of the peaceful art of healing, bursts out of the concourse, with his right arm extended and his chest thrown out as far as it will possibly come, and says: —

"Your countryman, sir!"

Whereupon Doctor Crocus and I shake hands; and Doctor Crocus looks as if I didn't by any means realise his expectations, which, in a linen blouse, and a great straw hat with a green ribbon, and no gloves, and my face and nose profusely ornamented with the stings of mosquitoes and the bites of bugs, it is very likely I did not.

"Long in these parts, sir?" says I.

"Three or four months, sir," says the doctor.

"Do you think of soon returning to the old country, sir?" says I.

Doctor Crocus makes no verbal answer, but gives me an imploring look, which says so plainly, "Will you ask me that again, a little louder, if you please?" that I repeat the question.

"Think of soon returning to the old country, sir!" repeats the doctor.

"To the old country, sir," I rejoin.

Doctor Crocus looks round upon the crowd to observe the effect he produces, rubs his hands, and says, in a very loud voice: —

"Not yet awhile, sir, not yet. You won't catch me at that just yet, sir. I am a little too fond of freedom for *that*, sir. Ha, ha! It's not so easy for a man to tear himself from a free country such as this is, sir. Ha, ha! No, no! Ha, ha! None of that till one's obliged to do it, sir. No, no!"

As Doctor Crocus says these latter words, he shakes his head knowingly, and laughs again. Many of the bystanders shake their heads in concert with the doctor, and laugh, too,

and look at each other as much as to say, "A pretty bright and first-rate sort of chap is Crocus!" and unless I am very much mistaken, a good many people went to the lecture that night, who never thought about phrenology, or about Doctor Crocus either, in all their lives before.

From Belleville we went on through the same desolate kind of waste, and constantly attended, without the interval of a moment, by the same music; until, at three o'clock in the afternoon, we halted once more at a village called Lebanon to inflate the horses again, and give them some corn besides; of which they stood much in need. Pending this ceremony, I walked into the village, where I met a full-sized dwelling-house coming down hill at a round trot, drawn by a score or more of oxen.

The public-house was so very clean and good a one that the managers of the jaunt resolved to return to it and put up there for the night, if possible. This course decided on, and the horses being well refreshed, we again pushed forward, and came upon the Prairie at sunset.

It would be difficult to say why, or how, — though it was possibly from having heard and read so much about it, — but the effect on me was disappointment. Looking towards the setting sun, there lay, stretched out before my view, a vast expanse of level ground; unbroken, save by one thin line of trees, which scarcely amounted to a scratch upon the great blank, until it met the glowing sky, wherein it seemed to dip, mingling with its rich colours, and mellowing in its distant blue. There it lay, a tranquil sea or lake without water, if such a simile be admissible, with the day going down upon it: a few birds wheeling here and there; and solitude and silence reigning paramount around. But the grass was not yet high; there were bare black patches on the ground; and the few wild flowers that the eye could see were poor and scanty. Great as the picture was, its very flatness and extent, which left nothing to the imagination, tamed it down and cramped its interest. I felt little of that sense of freedom and exhilaration which a Scottish heath inspires, or even our English downs awaken. It was lonely and wild, but oppressive in its barren monotony. I felt that in traversing the Prairies, I could never abandon myself to the scene, forgetful of all else; as I should do instinctively, were the heather underneath my feet, or an

iron-bound coast beyond; but should often glance [illegible] distant and frequently receding line of the [illegible] it gained and passed. It is not a scene to be [illegible] is scarcely one, I think (at all events, as I saw it, [illegible] with much pleasure, or to covet the looking on [illegible] life.

We encamped near a solitary log house, for [illegible] water, and dined upon the plain. The baskets [illegible] fowls, buffalo's tongue (an exquisite dainty, by the [illegible] bread, cheese and butter; biscuits, champagne, [illegible] and sugar for punch; and abundance of rough [illegible] was delicious, and the entertainers were the [illegible] and good humour. I have often recalled that [illegible] my pleasant recollection since, and shall not [illegible] junketings nearer home with friends of older date, [illegible] companions on the Prairie.

Returning to Lebanon that night, we lay at the [illegible] at which we had halted in the afternoon. In point of [illegible] ness and comfort it would have suffered by no [illegible] any village alehouse of a homely kind in England.

Rising at five o'clock next morning, I took a walk [illegible] village — none of the houses were strolling about to [illegible] was early for them yet, perhaps — and then [illegible] lounging in a kind of farmyard behind the tavern, [illegible] the leading features were a strange jumble of [illegible] stables; a rude colonnade, built as a cool [illegible] resort; a deep well; a great earthen mound for [illegible] tables in, in winter time; and a pigeon house, [illegible] apertures looked, as they do in all pigeon [illegible] too small for the admission of the plump and [illegible] birds who were strutting about it, though they tried [illegible] never so hard. That interest exhausted, I took a [illegible] the inn's two parlours, which were decorated [illegible] prints of Washington, and President Madison, [illegible] faced young lady (much speckled by the flies), [illegible] her gold neck-chain for the admiration of the [illegible] informed all admiring comers that she was "Just Seventeen" although I should have thought her older. In the [illegible] were two oil portraits of the kit-cat size, representing [illegible] lord and his infant son; both looking as bold as [illegible] staring out of the canvas with an intensity that [illegible]

been cheap at any price. They were painted, I think, by the artist who had touched up the Belleville doors with red and gold; for I seemed to recognise his style immediately.

After breakfast we started to return by a different way from that which we had taken yesterday, and coming up at ten o'clock with an encampment of German emigrants carrying their goods in carts, who had made a rousing fire which they were just quitting, stopped there to refresh. And very pleasant the fire was; for hot though it had been yesterday it was quite cold to-day, and the wind blew keenly. Looming in the distance, as we rode along, was another of the ancient Indian burial places, called the Monk's Mound; in memory of a body of fanatics of the order of La Trappe, who founded a desolate convent there, many years ago, when there were no settlers within a thousand miles, and were all swept off by the pernicious climate — in which lamentable fatality, few rational people will suppose, perhaps, that society experienced any very severe deprivation.

The track of to-day had the same features as the track of yesterday. There was the swamp, the bush, the perpetual chorus of frogs, the rank unseemly growth, the unwholesome steaming earth. Here and there, and frequently too, we encountered a solitary broken-down wagon, full of some new settler's goods. It was a pitiful sight to see one of these vehicles deep in the mire; the axletree broken; the wheel lying idly by its side; the man gone miles away, to look for assistance; the woman seated among their wandering household gods, with a baby at her breast, a picture of forlorn, dejected patience; the team of oxen crouching down mournfully in the mud, and breathing forth such clouds of vapour from their mouths and nostrils, that all the damp mist and fog around seemed to have come direct from them.

In due time we mustered once again before the merchant tailor's, and having done so, crossed over to the city in the ferry-boat — passing, on the way, a spot called Bloody Island, the duelling ground of St. Louis, and so designated in honour of the last fatal combat fought there, which was with pistols, breast to breast. Both combatants fell dead upon the ground; and possibly some rational people may think of them, as of the gloomy madmen on the Monk's Mound, that they were no great loss to the community.

CHAPTER XIV

RETURN TO CINCINNATI. A STAGE-COACH RIDE FROM THAT TO COLUMBUS, AND THENCE TO SANDUSKY. SO, BY LAKE [illegible] TO THE FALLS OF NIAGARA.

As I had a desire to travel through the interior of the [illegible] of Ohio, and to "strike the lakes," as the phrase is, at a [illegible] town called Sandusky, to which that route would [illegible] on our way to Niagara, we had to return from St. L[illegible] the way we had come, and to retrace our former track as far [illegible] Cincinnati.

The day on which we were to take leave of St. L[illegible] very fine; and the steamboat which was to have started I [illegible] know how early in the morning, postponing, for the [illegible] fourth time, her departure until the afternoon, we rode [illegible] to an old French village on the river, called properly [illegible] delet, and nicknamed Vide Poche, and arranged that the [illegible] should call for us there.

The place consisted of a few poor cottages, and two [illegible] public-houses; the state of whose larders certainly [illegible] justify the second designation of the village, for there [illegible] nothing to eat in any of them. At length, however, by [illegible] back some half a mile or so, we found a solitary [illegible] ham and coffee were procurable, and there we tarried to [illegible] the advent of the boat, which would come in sight from [illegible] green before the door, a long way off.

It was a neat, unpretending village tavern, and we took repast in a quaint little room with a bed in it, decorated [illegible] some old oil paintings, which in their time had probably [illegible] duty in a Catholic chapel or monastery. The fare was [illegible] good, and served with great cleanliness. The house was [illegible] by a characteristic old couple, with whom we had a long [illegible] and who were perhaps a very good sample of that kind [illegible] people in the West.

The landlord was a dry, tough, hard-faced old fellow

so very old either, for he was but just turned sixty, I should think), who had been out with the militia in the last war with England, and had seen all kinds of service — except a battle; and he had been very near seeing that, he added, very near. He had all his life been restless and locomotive, with an irresistible desire for change; and was still the son of his old self: for if he had nothing to keep him at home, he said (slightly jerking his hat and his thumb towards the window of the room in which the old lady sat, as we stood talking in front of the house) he would clean up his musket, and be off to Texas to-morrow morning. He was one of the very many descendants of Cain proper to this continent, who seem destined from their birth to serve as pioneers in the great human army; who gladly go on from year to year extending its outposts, and leaving home after home behind them; and die at last, utterly regardless of their graves being left thousands of miles behind, by the wandering generation who succeed.

His wife was a domesticated kind-hearted old soul, who had come with him "from the queen city of the world," which, it seemed, was Philadelphia; but had no love for this Western country, and indeed had little reason to bear it any — having seen her children, one by one, die here of fever, in the full prime and beauty of their youth. Her heart was sore, she said, to think of them; and to talk on this theme, even to strangers, in that blighted place, so far from her old home, eased it somewhat, and became a melancholy pleasure.

The boat appearing towards evening, we bade adieu to the poor old lady and her vagrant spouse, and making for the nearest landing-place, were soon on board The Messenger again, in our old cabin, and steaming down the Mississippi.

If the coming up this river, slowly making head against the stream, be an irksome journey, the shooting down it with the turbid current is almost worse; for then the boat, proceeding at the rate of twelve or fifteen miles an hour, has to force its passage through a labyrinth of floating logs, which, in the dark, it is often impossible to see beforehand or avoid. All that night the bell was never silent for five minutes at a time; and after every ring the vessel reeled again, sometimes beneath a single blow, sometimes beneath a dozen dealt in quick succession, the lightest of which seemed more than enough to beat in her frail keel, as though it had been pie-crust. Looking

down upon the filthy river after dark it seemed to be [illegible] with monsters, as these black masses rolled [illegible] or came starting up again, head first, when the boat, [illegible] ing her way among a shoal of such obstructions, drove [illegible] among them, for the moment, under water. [illegible] engine stopped during a long interval, and the [illegible] behind, and gathering close about her on all sides, [illegible] many of these ill-favoured obstacles that she was [illegible] in, the centre of a floating island; and was [illegible] pause until they parted, somewhere, as dark [illegible] before the wind, and opened by degrees a channel [illegible]

In good time next morning, however, we came [illegible] of the detestable morass called Cairo, and stopped [illegible] take in wood, lay alongside a large, white [illegible] scarcely held together. It was moored to the bank, [illegible] side was painted "Coffee House;" that being, I [illegible] floating paradise to which the people fly for shelter when [illegible] lose their houses for a month or two beneath the [illegible] waters of the Mississippi. But looking northward from [illegible] point, we had the satisfaction of seeing that [illegible] dragging its slimy length and ugly freight [illegible] New Orleans; and passing a yellow line which [illegible] the current, were again upon the clear Ohio, never, I [illegible] see the Mississippi more, saving in troubled dreams [illegible] mares. Leaving it for the company of its sparkling [illegible] was like the transition from pain to ease, or the awaking from a horrible vision to cheerful realities.

We arrived at Louisville on the fourth night, and [illegible] availed ourselves of its excellent hotel. Next day we went on in the Ben Franklin, a beautiful mail steamboat, and [illegible] Cincinnati shortly after midnight. Being by this time [illegible] tired of sleeping upon shelves, we had remained awake [illegible] ashore straightway; and groping a passage across the [illegible] decks of other boats, and among labyrinths of engine [illegible] and locking casks of molasses, we reached the streets, [illegible] up the porter at the hotel where we had stayed before, [illegible] were, to our great joy, safely housed soon afterwards.

We rested but one day at Cincinnati, and then resumed our journey to Sandusky. As it comprised two varieties of [illegible] coach travelling, which, with those I have already glanced [illegible] comprehend the main characteristics of this mode of trans-

America, I will take the reader as our fellow-passenger, and pledge myself to perform the distance with all possible despatch.

Our place of destination in the first instance is Columbus. It is distant about a hundred and twenty miles from Cincinnati, but there is a macadamised road (rare blessing!) the whole way, and the rate of travelling upon it is six miles an hour.

We start at eight o'clock in the morning, in a great mail-coach, whose huge cheeks are so very ruddy and plethoric, that it appears to be troubled with a tendency of blood to the head. Dropsical it certainly is, for it will hold a dozen passengers inside. But, wonderful to add, it is very clean and bright, being nearly new; and rattles through the streets of Cincinnati gaily.

Our way lies through a beautiful country, richly cultivated, and luxuriant in its promise of an abundant harvest. Sometimes we pass a field where the strong bristling stalks of Indian corn look like a crop of walking-sticks, and sometimes an enclosure where the green wheat is springing up among a labyrinth of stumps; the primitive worm-fence is universal, and an ugly thing it is; but the farms are neatly kept, and, save for these differences, one might be travelling just now in Kent.

We often stop to water at a roadside inn, which is always dull and silent. The coachman dismounts and fills his bucket, and holds it to the horses' heads. There is scarcely ever any one to help him; there are seldom any loungers standing round; and never any stable company with jokes to crack. Sometimes, when we have changed our team, there is a difficulty in starting again, arising out of the prevalent mode of breaking a young horse: which is to catch him, harness him against his will, and put him in a stage-coach without further notice; but we get on somehow or other, after a great many kicks and a violent struggle, and jog on as before again.

Occasionally, when we stop to change, some two or three half-drunken loafers will come loitering out with their hands in their pockets, or will be seen kicking their heels in rocking-chairs, or lounging on the window-sill, or sitting on a rail within the colonnade; they have not often anything to say though, either to us or to each other, but sit there idly staring at the coach and horses. The landlord of the inn is usually

among them, and seems, of all the party, to be the least connected with the business of the house. Indeed he is with reference to the tavern, what the driver is in relation to the coach and passengers: whatever happens in his sphere of action, is quite indifferent, and perfectly easy in his mind.

The frequent change of coachmen works no change or variety in the coachman's character. He is always dirty, sullen, and taciturn. If he be capable of smartness of any kind, moral or physical, he has a faculty of concealing it which is truly marvellous. He never speaks to you as you sit beside him on the box, and if you speak to him, he answers (if at all) in monosyllables. He points out nothing on the road, and seldom looks at anything — being, to all appearance, thoroughly weary of it, and of existence generally. As to doing the honours of his coach, his business, as I have said, is with the horses. The coach follows because it is attached to them and goes on wheels; not because you are in it. Sometimes, towards the end of a long stage, he suddenly breaks out into a discordant fragment of an election song, but his face never sings along with him; it is only his voice, and not often that.

He always chews and always spits, and never incumbers himself with a pocket-handkerchief. The consequences to the box passenger, especially when the wind blows towards him, are not agreeable.

Whenever the coach stops, and you can hear the voices of the inside passengers; or whenever any bystander addresses them, or any one among them; or they address each other; you will hear one phrase repeated over and over and over again to the most extraordinary extent. It is an ordinary and unpromising phrase enough, being neither more nor less than "Yes, sir;" but it is adapted to every variety of circumstance, and fills up every pause in the conversation. Thus: —

The time is one o'clock at noon. The scene, a place where we are to stay to dine on this journey. The coach drives up to the door of an inn. The day is warm, and there are several idlers lingering about the tavern, and waiting for the public dinner. Among them is a stout gentleman in a brown hat, swinging himself to and fro in a rocking-chair on the pavement.

As the coach stops, a gentleman in a straw hat looks out of the window.

STRAW HAT. (To the stout gentleman in the rocking-chair.) I reckon that 's Judge Jefferson, ain't it?

BROWN HAT. (Still swinging; speaking very slowly, and without any emotion whatever.) Yes, sir.

STRAW HAT. Warm weather, judge.

BROWN HAT. Yes, sir.

STRAW HAT. There was a snap of cold last week.

BROWN HAT. Yes, sir.

STRAW HAT. Yes, sir.

A pause. They look at each other very seriously.

STRAW HAT. I calculate you 'll have got through that case of the corporation, judge, by this time, now?

BROWN HAT. Yes, sir.

STRAW HAT. How did the verdict go, sir?

BROWN HAT. For the defendant, sir.

STRAW HAT. (Interrogatively.) Yes, sir?

BROWN HAT. (Affirmatively.) Yes, sir.

BOTH. (Musingly, as each gazes down the street.) Yes, sir.

Another pause. They look at each other again, still more seriously than before.

BROWN HAT. This coach is rather behind its time to-day, I guess.

STRAW HAT. (Doubtingly.) Yes, sir.

BROWN HAT. (Looking at his watch.) Yes, sir; nigh upon two hours.

STRAW HAT. (Raising his eyebrows in very great surprise.) Yes, sir!

BROWN HAT. (Decisively, as he puts up his watch.) Yes, sir.

ALL THE OTHER INSIDE PASSENGERS. (Among themselves.) Yes, sir.

COACHMAN. (In a very surly tone.) No, it ain't.

STRAW HAT. (To the coachman.) Well, I don't know, sir. We were a pretty tall time coming that last fifteen mile. That 's a fact.

The coachman making no reply, and plainly declining to enter into any controversy on a subject so far removed from his sympathies and feelings, another passenger says, "Yes, sir;" and the gentleman in the straw hat in acknowledgment of his courtesy, says, "Yes, sir," to him, in return. The straw

hat then inquires of the brown hat, whether that coach in which he (the straw hat) then sits, is not a new one? To which the brown hat again makes answer, "Yes, sir."

STRAW HAT. I thought so. Pretty loud smell of varnish, sir?

BROWN HAT. Yes, sir.

ALL THE OTHER INSIDE PASSENGERS. Yes, sir.

BROWN HAT. (To the company in general.) Yes, sir.

The conversational powers of the company having been by this time pretty heavily taxed, the straw hat opens the door and gets out; and all the rest alight also. We dine soon afterwards with the boarders in the house, and have nothing to drink but tea and coffee. As they are both very bad and the water is worse, I ask for brandy; but it is a Temperance Hotel, and spirits are not to be had for love or money. This preposterous forcing of unpleasant drinks down the reluctant throats of travellers is not at all uncommon in America, but I never discovered that the scruples of such wincing landlords induced them to preserve any unusually nice balance between the quality of their fare and their scale of charges: on the contrary, I rather suspected them of diminishing the one and exalting the other, by way of recompense for the loss of their profit on the sale of spirituous liquors. After all, perhaps, the plainest course for persons of such tender consciences would be a total abstinence from tavern keeping.

Dinner over, we get into another vehicle which is ready at the door (for the coach has been changed in the interval), and resume our journey; which continues through the same kind of country until evening, when we come to the town where we are to stop for tea and supper; and having delivered the mail bags at the Post Office, ride through the usual wide street, lined with the usual stores and houses (the drapers always having hung up at their door, by way of sign, a piece of bright red cloth), to the hotel where this meal is prepared. There being many boarders here, we sit down a large party, and a very melancholy one as usual. But there is a buxom hostess at the head of the table, and opposite, a simple Welsh schoolmaster with his wife and child; who came here, on a speculation of greater promise than performance, to teach the classics; and they are sufficient subjects of interest until the meal is over, and another coach is ready. In it we go on once more,

lighted by a bright moon, until midnight; when we stop to change the coach again, and remain for half an hour or so in a miserable room, with a blurred lithograph of Washington over the smoky fireplace, and a mighty jug of cold water on the table; to which refreshment the moody passengers do so apply themselves that they would seem to be, one and all, keen patients of Doctor Sangrado. Among them is a very little boy, who chews tobacco like a very big one; and a droning gentleman, who talks arithmetically and statistically on all subjects, from poetry downwards; and who always speaks in the same key, with exactly the same emphasis, and with very grave deliberation. He came outside just now, and told me how that the uncle of a certain young lady who had been spirited away and married by a certain captain, lived in these parts; and how this uncle was so valiant and ferocious that he shouldn't wonder if he were to follow the said captain to England, "and shoot him down in the street, wherever he found him;" in the feasibility of which strong measure I, being for the moment rather prone to contradiction, from feeling half asleep and very tired, declined to acquiesce — assuring him that if the uncle did resort to it, or gratified any other little whim of the like nature, he would find himself one morning prematurely throttled at the Old Bailey; and that he would do well to make his will before he went, as he would certainly want it before he had been in Britain very long.

On we go, all night, and by and by the day begins to break, and presently the first cheerful rays of the warm sun come slanting on us brightly. It sheds its light upon a miserable waste of sodden grass, and dull trees, and squalid huts, whose aspect is forlorn and grievous in the last degree. A very desert in the wood, whose growth of green is dank and noxious like that upon the top of standing water; where poisonous fungus grows in the rare footprint on the oozy ground, and sprouts like witches' coral from the crevices in the cabin wall and floor; it is a hideous thing to lie upon the very threshold of a city. But it was purchased years ago, and as the owner cannot be discovered, the State has been unable to reclaim it. So there it remains, in the midst of cultivation and improvement, like ground accursed, and made obscene and rank by some great crime.

We reached Columbus shortly before seven o'clock, and

stayed there, to refresh, that day and night; having excellent apartments in a very large unfinished hotel called the Neill House, which were richly fitted with the polished wood of the black walnut, and opened on a handsome portico and stone verandah, like rooms in some Italian mansion. The town is clean and pretty, and of course is "going to be" much larger. It is the seat of the State legislature of Ohio, and lays claim, in consequence, to some consideration and importance.

There being no stage-coach next day upon the road we wished to take, I hired "an extra," at a reasonable charge, to carry us to Tiffin, a small town from whence there is a rail-road to Sandusky. This extra was an ordinary four-horse stage-coach, such as I have described, changing horses and drivers, as the stage-coach would, but was exclusively our own for the journey. To ensure our having horses at the proper stations, and being incommoded by no strangers, the proprietors sent an agent on the box, who was to accompany us the whole way through; and thus attended, and bearing with us, besides, a hamper full of savoury cold meats, and fruit, and wine, we started off again, in high spirits, at half-past six o'clock next morning, very much delighted to be by ourselves, and disposed to enjoy even the roughest journey.

It was well for us that we were in this humour, for the road we went over that day was certainly enough to have shaken tempers that were not resolutely at Set Fair, down to some inches below Stormy. At one time we were all flung together in a heap at the bottom of the coach, and at another we were crushing our heads against the roof. Now one side was down deep in the mire, and we were holding on to the other. Now the coach was lying on the tails of the two wheelers; and now it was rearing up in the air in a frantic state, with all four horses standing on the top of an insurmountable eminence, looking coolly back at it, as though they would say "Unharness us. It can't be done." The drivers on these roads, who certainly get over the ground in a manner which is quite miraculous, so twist and turn the team about in forcing a passage, corkscrew fashion, through the bogs and swamps, that it was quite a common circumstance on looking out of the window, to see the coachman with the ends of a pair of reins in his hands, apparently driving nothing, or playing at horses, and the leaders staring at one unexpectedly from the back of

the coach, as if they had some idea of getting up behind. A great portion of the way was over what is called a corduroy road, which is made by throwing trunks of trees into a marsh, and leaving them to settle there. The very slightest of the jolts with which the ponderous carriage fell from log to log was enough, it seemed, to have dislocated all the bones in the human body. It would be impossible to experience a similar sort of sensations, in any other circumstances, unless perhaps in attempting to go up to the top of St. Paul's in an omnibus. Never, never once that day, was the coach in any position, attitude, or kind of motion to which we are accustomed in coaches. Never did it make the smallest approach to one's experience of the proceedings of any sort of vehicle that goes on wheels.

Still it was a fine day, and the temperature was delicious, and though we had left Summer behind us in the west, and were fast leaving Spring, we were moving towards Niagara and home. We alighted in a pleasant wood towards the middle of the day, dined on a fallen tree, and leaving our best fragments with a cottager, and our worst with the pigs (who swarm in this part of the country like grains of sand on the seashore, to the great comfort of our commissariat in Canada), we went forward again, gaily.

As night came on the track grew narrower and narrower, until at last it so lost itself among the trees, that the driver seemed to find his way by instinct. We had the comfort of knowing, at least, that there was no danger of his falling asleep, for every now and then a wheel would strike against an unseen stump with such a jerk that he was fain to hold on pretty tight and pretty quick, to keep himself upon the box. Nor was there any reason to dread the least danger from furious driving, inasmuch as over that broken ground the horses had enough to do to walk; as to shying, there was no room for that; and a herd of wild elephants could not have run away in such a wood, with such a coach at their heels. So we stumbled along, quite satisfied.

These stumps of trees are a curious feature in American travelling. The varying illusions they present to the unaccustomed eye as it grows dark, are quite astonishing in their number and reality. Now there is a Grecian urn erected in the centre of a lonely field; now there is a woman weeping at a

tomb; now a very commonplace old gentleman in a white waistcoat, with a thumb thrust into each arm-hole of his coat: now a student poring on a book; now a crouching negro; now a horse, a dog, a cannon, an armed man; a hunchback throwing off his cloak and stepping forth into the light. They were often as entertaining to me as so many glasses in a magic lantern, and never took their shapes at my bidding, but seemed to force themselves upon me, whether I would or no; and strange to say, I sometimes recognised in them counterparts of figures once familiar to me in pictures attached to childish books forgotten long ago.

It soon became too dark, however, even for this amusement, and the trees were so close together that their dry branches rattled against the coach on either side, and obliged us all to keep our heads within. It lightened too, for three whole hours; each flash being very bright, and blue, and long; and as the vivid streaks came darting in among the crowded branches, and the thunder rolled gloomily above the tree tops, one could scarcely help thinking that there were better neighbourhoods at such a time than thick woods afforded.

At length, between ten and eleven o'clock at night, a few feeble lights appeared in the distance, and Upper Sandusky, an Indian village, where we were to stay till morning, lay before us.

They were gone to bed at the log Inn, which was the only house of entertainment in the place, but soon answered to our knocking, and got some tea for us in a sort of kitchen or common room, tapestried with old newspapers, pasted against the wall. The bed-chamber to which my wife and I were shown was a large, low, ghostly room; with a quantity of withered branches on the hearth, and two doors without any fastening, opposite to each other, both opening on the black night and wild country, and so contrived that one of them always blew the other open; a novelty in domestic architecture, which I do not remember to have seen before, and which I was somewhat disconcerted to have forced on my attention after getting into bed, as I had a considerable sum in gold for our travelling expenses, in my dressing-case. Some of the luggage, however, piled against the panels, soon settled this difficulty, and my sleep would not have been very much affected that night, I believe, though it had failed to do so.

My Boston friend climbed up to bed somewhere in the roof, where another guest was already snoring hugely. But being bitten beyond his power of endurance, he turned out again, and fled for shelter to the coach, which was airing itself in front of the house. This was not a very politic step, as it turned out; for the pigs scenting him, and looking upon the coach as a kind of pie with some manner of meat inside, grunted round it so hideously that he was afraid to come out again, and lay there shivering till morning. Nor was it possible to warm him when he did come out, by means of a glass of brandy; for in Indian villages, the legislature, with a very good and wise intention, forbids the sale of spirits by tavern keepers. The precaution, however, is quite inefficacious, for the Indians never fail to procure liquor of a worse kind, at a dearer price, from travelling pedlars.

It is a settlement of the Wyandot Indians who inhabit this place. Among the company at breakfast was a mild old gentleman who had been for many years employed by the United States Government in conducting negotiations with the Indians, and who had just concluded a treaty with these people by which they bound themselves, in consideration of a certain annual sum, to remove next year to some land provided for them, west of the Mississippi, and a little way beyond St. Louis. He gave me a moving account of their strong attachment to the familiar scenes of their infancy, and in particular to the burial places of their kindred; and of their great reluctance to leave them. He had witnessed many such removals, and always with pain, though he knew that they departed for their own good. The question whether this tribe should go or stay had been discussed among them a day or two before, in a hut erected for the purpose, the logs of which still lay upon the ground before the inn. When the speaking was done, the ayes and noes were ranged on opposite sides, and every male adult voted in his turn. The moment the result was known, the minority (a large one) cheerfully yielded to the rest, and withdrew all kind of opposition.

We met some of these poor Indians afterwards, riding on shaggy ponies. They were so like the meaner sort of gipsies that, if I could have seen any of them in England, I should have concluded, as a matter of course, that they belonged to that wandering and restless people.

Leaving this town directly after breakfast we pushed forward again, over a rather worse road than yesterday, if possible, and arrived about noon at Tiffin where we parted with the extra. At two o'clock we took the railroad; the travelling on which was very slow, its construction being indifferent, and the ground wet and marshy; and arrived at Sandusky in time to dine that evening. We put up at a comfortable little hotel on the brink of Lake Erie, lay there that night, and had no choice but to wait there next day until a steamboat bound for Buffalo appeared. The town, which was sluggish and uninteresting enough, was something like the back of an English watering-place out of the season.

Our host, who was very attentive and anxious to make us comfortable, was a handsome middle-aged man, who had come to this town from New England, in which part of the country he was "raised." When I say that he constantly walked in and out of the room with his hat on; and stopped to converse in the same free and easy state; and lay down on our sofa, and pulled his newspaper out of his pocket, and read it at his ease; I merely mention these traits as characteristic of the country: not at all as being matter of complaint, or as having been disagreeable to me. I should undoubtedly be offended by such proceedings at home, because there they are not the custom, and where they are not, they would be impertinences; but in America, the only desire of a good-natured fellow of this kind is to treat his guests hospitably and well; and I had no more right, and I can truly say no more disposition, to measure his conduct by our English rule and standard, than I had to quarrel with him for not being of the exact stature which would qualify him for admission into the Queen's Grenadier Guards. As little inclination had I to find fault with a funny old lady who was an upper domestic in this establishment, and who, when she came to wait upon us at any meal, sat herself down comfortably in the most convenient chair, and, producing a large pin to pick her teeth with, remained performing that ceremony, and steadfastly regarding us meanwhile with much gravity and composure (now and then pressing us to eat a little more), until it was time to clear away. It was enough for us that whatever we wished done was done with great civility and readiness, and a desire to oblige, not only here, but everywhere else; and that all our wants were, in general, zealously anticipated.

We were taking an early dinner at this house on the day after our arrival, which was Sunday, when a steamboat came in sight, and presently touched at the wharf. As she proved to be on her way to Buffalo, we hurried on board with all speed, and soon left Sandusky far behind us.

She was a large vessel of five hundred tons, and handsomely fitted up, though with high-pressure engines; which always conveyed that kind of feeling to me which I should be likely to experience, I think, if I had lodgings on the first floor of a powder mill. She was laden with flour, some casks of which commodity were stored upon the deck. The captain coming up to have a little conversation, and to introduce a friend, seated himself astride of one of these barrels like a Bacchus of private life; and pulling a great clasp-knife out of his pocket, began to "whittle" it as he talked, by paring thin slices off the edges. And he whittled with such industry and hearty good will that, but for his being called away very soon, it must have disappeared bodily, and left nothing in its place but grist and shavings.

After calling at one or two flat places, with low dams stretching out into the lake, whereon were stumpy lighthouses like windmills without sails, the whole looking like a Dutch vignette, we came at midnight to Cleveland, where we lay all night, and until nine o'clock next morning.

I entertained quite a curiosity in reference to this place, from having seen at Sandusky a specimen of its literature in the shape of a newspaper, which was very strong, indeed, upon the subject of Lord Ashburton's recent arrival at Washington, to adjust the points in dispute between the United States Government and Great Britain; informing its readers that as America had "whipped" England in her infancy, and whipped her again in her youth, so it was clearly necessary that she must whip her once again in her maturity; and pledging its credit to all True Americans, that if Mr. Webster did his duty in the approaching negotiations, and sent the English Lord home again in double-quick time, they should, within two years, sing "Yankee Doodle in Hyde Park, and Hail Columbia in the scarlet courts of Westminster!" I found it a pretty town, and had the satisfaction of beholding the outside of the office of the journal from which I have just quoted. I did not enjoy the delight of seeing the wit who indited the paragraphs

in question, but I have no doubt she is a good [illegible] in her way, and [illegible] by a [illegible].

There was a gentleman on board to whom, as I unintentionally learned through the thin partition which divided our state-room from the cabin in which he and his wife conversed together, I was unwittingly the occasion of very great uneasiness. I don't know why or wherefore, but I appeared to run in his mind perpetually, and to dissatisfy him very much. First of all, I heard him say — and the most ludicrous part of the business was that he said it in my very ear, and could not have communicated more directly with me, if he had leaned upon my shoulder, and whispered me — "Boz is on board still, my dear." After a considerable pause, he added, complainingly, "Boz keeps himself very close," which was true enough, for I was not very well, and was lying down, with a book. I thought he had done with me after this, but I was deceived; for a long interval having elapsed, during which I imagine him to have been turning restlessly from side to side, and trying to go to sleep; he broke out again, with "I suppose *that* Boz will be writing a book by and by, and putting all our names in it!" at which imaginary consequence of being on board a boat with Boz, he groaned, and became silent.

We called at the town of Erie at eight o'clock that night, and lay there an hour. Between five and six next morning, we arrived at Buffalo, where we breakfasted, and being too near the Great Falls to wait patiently anywhere else, we set off by the train, the same morning at nine o'clock, to Niagara.

It was a miserable day; chilly and raw, a damp mist falling, and the trees in that northern region quite bare and wintry. Whenever the train halted I listened for the roar; and was constantly straining my eyes in the direction where I knew the Falls must be, from seeing the river rolling on towards them; every moment expecting to behold the spray. Within a few minutes of our stopping, not before, I saw two great white clouds rising up slowly and majestically from the depths of the earth. That was all. At length we alighted: and then for the first time, I heard the mighty rush of water, and felt the ground tremble underneath my feet.

The bank is very steep, and was slippery with rain, and half-melted ice. I hardly know how I got down, but I was soon at the bottom, and climbing, with two English officers who were [illegible]

crossing and had joined me, over some broken rocks, deafened by the noise, half blinded by the spray, and wet to the skin. We were at the foot of the American Fall. I could see an immense torrent of water tearing headlong down from some great height, but had no idea of shape, or situation, or anything but vague immensity.

When we were seated in the little ferry-boat, and were crossing the swollen river immediately before both cataracts, I began to feel what it was: but I was in a manner stunned, and unable to comprehend the vastness of the scene. It was not until I came on Table Rock, and looked — Great Heaven, on what a fall of bright green water! — that it came upon me in its full might and majesty.

Then when I felt how near to my Creator I was standing, the first effect, and the enduring one — instant and lasting — of the tremendous spectacle, was Peace. Peace of Mind, tranquillity, calm recollections of the Dead, great thoughts of Eternal Rest and Happiness: nothing of gloom or terror. Niagara was at once stamped upon my heart, an Image of Beauty; to remain there, changeless and indelible, until its pulses cease to beat, for ever.

Oh, how the strife and trouble of daily life receded from my view, and lessened in the distance, during the ten memorable days we passed on that Enchanted Ground! What voices spoke from out the thundering water; what faces, faded from the earth, looked out upon me from its gleaming depths; what Heavenly promise glistened in those angels' tears, the drops of many hues, that showered around, and twined themselves about the gorgeous arches which the changing rainbows made!

I never stirred in all that time from the Canadian side, whither I had gone at first. I never crossed the river again, for I knew there were people on the other shore, and in such a place it is natural to shun strange company. To wander to and fro all day, and see the cataracts from all points of view; to stand upon the edge of the Great Horse-Shoe Fall, marking the hurried water gathering strength as it approached the verge, yet seeming, too, to pause before it shot into the gulf below; to gaze from the river's level up at the torrent as it came streaming down; to climb the neighbouring heights and watch it through the trees, and see the wreathing water in the rapids hurrying on to take its fearful plunge; to linger in the shadow of the

solemn rocks three miles below; watching the river as, stirred by no visible cause, it heaved and eddied and awoke the echoes, being troubled yet, far down beneath the surface, by its giant leap; to have Niagara before me, lighted by the sun and by the moon, red in the day's decline, and grey as evening slowly fell upon it; to look upon it every day, and wake up in the night and hear its ceaseless voice: this was enough.

I think in every quiet season now, still do those waters roll and leap, and roar and tumble, all day long; still are the rainbows spanning them, a hundred feet below. Still, when the sun is on them, do they shine and glow like molten gold. Still, when the day is gloomy, do they fall like snow, or seem to crumble away like the front of a great chalk cliff, or roll down the rock like dense white smoke. But always does the mighty stream appear to die as it comes down, and always from its unfathomable grave arises that tremendous ghost of spray and mist, which is never laid — which has haunted this place with the same dread solemnity since Darkness brooded on the deep, and that first flood before the Deluge — Light — came rushing on Creation at the word of God.

CHAPTER XV

IN CANADA: TORONTO; KINGSTON; MONTREAL; QUEBEC; ST. JOHN'S. IN THE UNITED STATES AGAIN: LEBANON; THE SHAKER VILLAGE; AND WEST POINT.

I WISH to abstain from instituting any comparison, or drawing any parallel whatever, between the social features of the United States and those of the British Possessions in Canada. For this reason, I shall confine myself to a very brief account of our journeyings in the latter territory.

But before I leave Niagara, I must advert to one disgusting circumstance, which can hardly have escaped the observation of any decent traveller who has visited the Falls.

On Table Rock there is a cottage belonging to a Guide, where little relics of the place are sold, and where visitors register their names in a book kept for the purpose. On the wall of the room in which a great many of these volumes are preserved, the following request is posted: "Visitors will please not copy nor extract the remarks and poetical effusions from the registers and albums kept here."

But for this intimation, I should have let them lie upon the tables on which they were strewn with careful negligence, like books in a drawing-room: being quite satisfied with the stupendous silliness of certain stanzas with an anti-climax at the end of each, which were framed and hung up on the wall. Curious, however, after reading this announcement, to see what kind of morsels were so carefully preserved, I turned a few leaves, and found them scrawled all over with the vilest and the filthiest ribaldry that ever human hogs delighted in.

It is humiliating enough to know that there are among men brutes so obscene and worthless that they can delight in laying their miserable profanations upon the very steps of Nature's greatest altar. But that these should be hoarded up for the delight of their fellow-swine, and kept in a public place where any eyes may see them, is a disgrace to the English language in

which they are written (though I hope few of these entries have been made by Englishmen), and a reproach to the English side, on which they are preserved.

The quarters of our soldiers at Niagara are finely and airily situated. Some of them are large detached houses on the plain above the Falls, which were originally designed for hotels; and in the evening time, when the women and children were leaning over the balconies watching the men as they played at ball and other games upon the grass before the door, they often presented a little picture of cheerfulness and animation which made it quite a pleasure to pass that way.

At any garrisoned point where the line of demarcation between one country and another is so very narrow as at Niagara, desertion from the ranks can scarcely fail to be of frequent occurrence; and it may be reasonably supposed that when the soldiers entertain the wildest and maddest hopes of the fortune and independence that await them on the other side, the impulse to play traitor, which such a place suggests to dishonest minds, is not weakened. But it very rarely happens that the men who do desert are happy or contented afterwards; and many instances have been known in which they have confessed their grievous disappointment, and their earnest desire to return to their old service if they could but be assured of pardon, or of lenient treatment. Many of their comrades, notwithstanding, do the like, from time to time; and instances of loss of life in the effort to cross the river with this object are far from being uncommon. Several men were drowned in the attempt to swim across, not long ago; and one, who had the madness to trust himself upon a table as a raft, was swept down to the whirlpool, where his mangled body eddied round and round some days.

I am inclined to think that the noise of the Falls is very much exaggerated; and this will appear the more probable when the depth of the great basin in which the water is received is taken into account. At no time during our stay there was the wind at all high or boisterous, but we never heard them, three miles off, even at the very quiet time of sunset, though we often tried.

Queenston, at which place the steamboats start for Toronto (or I should rather say at which place they call, for their wharf is at Lewiston on the opposite shore), is situated in a delicious

valley, through which the Niagara River, in colour a very deep green, pursues its course. It is approached by a road that takes its winding way among the heights by which the town is sheltered; and seen from this point is extremely beautiful and picturesque. On the most conspicuous of these heights stood a monument erected by the Provincial Legislature in memory of General Brock, who was slain in a battle with the American forces, after having won the victory. Some vagabond, supposed to be a fellow of the name of Lett, who is now, or who lately was, in prison as a felon, blew up this monument two years ago, and it is now a melancholy ruin, with a long fragment of iron railing hanging dejectedly from its top, and waving to and fro like a wild ivy branch or broken vine stem. It is of much higher importance than it may seem that this statue should be repaired at the public cost, as it ought to have been long ago. Firstly, because it is beneath the dignity of England to allow a memorial raised in honour of one of her defenders, to remain in this condition, on the very spot where he died. Secondly, because the sight of it in its present state, and the recollection of the unpunished outrage which brought it to this pass, is not very likely to soothe down border feelings among English subjects here, or compose their border quarrels and dislikes.

I was standing on the wharf at this place, watching the passengers embarking in a steamboat which preceded that whose coming we awaited, and participating in the anxiety with which a sergeant's wife was collecting her few goods together — keeping one distracted eye hard upon the porters, who were hurrying them on board, and the other on a hoopless washing tub for which, as being the most utterly worthless of all her movables, she seemed to entertain particular affection — when three or four soldiers with a recruit came up and went on board.

The recruit was a likely young fellow enough, strongly built and well made, but by no means sober: indeed, he had all the air of a man who had been more or less drunk for some days. He carried a small bundle over his shoulder, slung at the end of a walking-stick, and had a short pipe in his mouth. He was as dusty and dirty as recruits usually are, and his shoes betokened that he had travelled on foot some distance, but he was in a very jocose state, and shook hands with this

soldier, and clapped that one on the back, and talked and laughed continually, like a roaring idle dog as he was.

The soldiers rather laughed at this blade than with him; seeming to say, as they stood straightening their canes in their hands, and looking coolly at him over their glazed stocks, "Go on, my boy, while you may! you 'll know better by and by;" when suddenly the novice, who had been backing towards the gangway in his noisy merriment, fell overboard before their eyes, and splashed heavily down into the river between the vessel and the dock.

I never saw such a good thing as the change that came over these soldiers in an instant. Almost before the man was down, their professional manner, their stiffness and constraint, were gone, and they were filled with the most violent energy. In less time than is required to tell it, they had him out again, feet first, with the tails of his coat flapping over his eyes, everything about him hanging the wrong way, and the water streaming off at every thread in his threadbare dress. But the moment they set him upright and found that he was none the worse, they were soldiers again, looking over their glazed stocks more composedly than ever.

The half-sobered recruit glanced round for a moment, as if his first impulse were to express some gratitude for his preservation, but seeing them with this air of total unconcern, and having his wet pipe presented to him with an oath by the soldier who had been by far the most anxious of the party, he stuck it in his mouth, thrust his hands into his moist pockets, and without even shaking the water off his clothes, walked on board whistling; not to say as if nothing had happened, but as if he had meant to do it, and it had been a perfect success.

Our steamboat came up directly this had left the wharf, and soon bore us to the mouth of the Niagara, where the stars and stripes of America flutter on one side, and the Union Jack of England on the other; and so narrow is the space between them that the sentinels in either fort can often hear the watchword of the other country given. Thence we emerged on Lake Ontario, an inland sea; and by half-past six o'clock were at Toronto.

The country round this town being very flat is bare of scenic interest; but the town itself is full of life and motion, bustle, business, and improvement. The streets are well

paved, and lighted with gas; the houses are large and good; the shops excellent. Many of them have a display of goods in their windows, such as may be seen in thriving county towns in England; and there are some which would do no discredit to the metropolis itself. There is a good stone prison here; and there are, besides, a handsome church, a court house, public offices, many commodious private residences, and a government observatory for noting and recording the magnetic variations. In the College of Upper Canada, which is one of the public establishments of the city, a sound education in every department of polite learning can be had, at a very moderate expense: the annual charge for the instruction of each pupil not exceeding nine pounds sterling. It has pretty good endowments in the way of land, and is a valuable and useful institution.

The first stone of a new college had been laid but a few days before, by the Governor General. It will be a handsome, spacious edifice, approached by a long avenue, which is already planted and made available as a public walk. The town is well adapted for wholesome exercise at all seasons, for the footways in the thoroughfares which lie beyond the principal street are planked like floors, and kept in very good and clean repair.

It is a matter of deep regret that political differences should have run high in this place, and led to most discreditable and disgraceful results. It is not long since guns were discharged from a window in this town at the successful candidates in an election, and the coachman of one of them was actually shot in the body, though not dangerously wounded. But one man was killed on the same occasion; and from the very window whence he received his death, the very flag which shielded his murderer (not only in the commission of his crime, but from its consequences) was displayed again on the occasion of the public ceremony performed by the Governor General, to which I have just adverted. Of all the colours in the rainbow, there is but one which could be so employed: I need not say that flag was orange.

The time of leaving Toronto for Kingston is noon. By eight o'clock next morning, the traveller is at the end of his journey, which is performed by steamboat upon Lake Ontario, calling at Port Hope and Coburg, the latter a cheerful thriving

At eight we landed again, and travelled by a stage-coach for four hours through a pleasant and well-cultivated country, perfectly French in every respect: in the appearance of the cottages; the air, language, and dress of the peasantry, the sign boards on the shops and taverns, and the Virgin's shrines and crosses by the wayside. Nearly every common labourer and boy, though he had no shoes to his feet, wore round his waist a sash of some bright colour, generally red, and the women, who were working in the fields and gardens and doing all kinds of husbandry, wore, one and all, great flat straw hats with most capacious brims. There were Catholic Priests and Sisters of Charity in the village streets; and images of the Saviour at the corners of cross-roads, and in other public places.

At noon we went on board another steamboat, and reached the village of Lachine, nine miles from Montreal, by three o'clock. There we left the river, and went on by land.

Montreal is pleasantly situated on the margin of the St. Lawrence, and is backed by some bold heights, about which there are charming rides and drives. The streets are generally narrow and irregular, as in most French towns of any age; but in the more modern parts of the city they are wide and airy. They display a great variety of very good shops; and both in the town and suburbs there are many excellent private dwellings. The granite quays are remarkable for their beauty, solidity, and extent.

There is a very large Catholic cathedral here, recently erected; with two tall spires, of which one is yet unfinished. In the open space in front of this edifice, stands a solitary, grim-looking, square brick tower, which has a quaint and remarkable appearance, and which the wiseacres of the place have consequently determined to pull down immediately. The Government House is very superior to that at Kingston, and the town is full of life and bustle. In one of the suburbs is a plank road — not footpath — five or six miles long, and a famous road it is too. All the rides in the vicinity were made doubly interesting by the bursting out of spring, which is here so rapid, that it is but a day's leap from barren winter to the blooming youth of summer.

The steamboats to Quebec perform the journey in the night; that is to say, they leave Montreal at six in the evening and

arrive in Quebec at six next morning. We made this excursion during our stay in Montreal (which exceeded a fortnight), and were charmed by its interest and beauty.

The impression made upon the visitor by this Gibraltar of America: its giddy heights; its citadel suspended, as it were, in the air; its picturesque steep streets and frowning gateways, and the splendid views which burst upon the eye at every turn, is at once unique and lasting.

It is a place not to be forgotten or mixed up in the mind with other places, or altered for a moment in the crowd of scenes a traveller can recall. Apart from the realities of this most picturesque city, there are associations clustering about it which would make a desert rich in interest. The dangerous precipice along whose rocky front Wolfe and his brave companions climbed to glory; the Plains of Abraham, where he received his mortal wound; the fortress so chivalrously defended by Montcalm; and his soldier's grave, dug for him while yet alive, by the bursting of a shell; are not the least among them, or among the gallant incidents of history. That is a noble Monument too, and worthy of two great nations, which perpetuates the memory of both brave generals, and on which their names are jointly written.

The city is rich in public institutions and in Catholic churches and charities, but it is mainly in the prospect from the site of the Old Government House, and from the Citadel, that its surpassing beauty lies. The exquisite expanse of country, rich in field and forest, mountain-height and water, which lies stretched out before the view, with miles of Canadian villages, glancing in long white streaks, like veins along the landscape; the motley crowd of gables, roofs, and chimney tops in the old hilly town immediately at hand; the beautiful St. Lawrence sparkling and flashing in the sunlight; and the tiny ships below the rock from which you gaze, whose distant rigging looks like spiders' webs against the light, while casks and barrels on their decks dwindle into toys, and busy mariners become so many puppets: all this, framed by a sunken window in the fortress and looked at from the shadowed room within, forms one of the brightest and most enchanting pictures that the eye can rest upon.

In the spring of the year, vast numbers of emigrants who have newly arrived from England or from Ireland, pass between

Quebec and Montreal on their way to the backwoods and new settlements of Canada. If it be an entertaining lounge (as I very often found it) to take a morning stroll upon the quay at Montreal, and see them grouped in hundreds on the public wharfs about their chests and boxes, it is matter of deep interest to be their fellow-passenger on one of these steamboats, and, mingling with the concourse, see and hear them unobserved.

The vessel in which we returned from Quebec to Montreal was crowded with them, and at night they spread their beds between decks (those who had beds at least), and slept so close and thick about our cabin door that the passage to and fro was quite blocked up. They were nearly all English, from Gloucestershire the greater part, and had had a long winter passage out; but it was wonderful to see how clean the children had been kept, and how untiring in their love and self-denial all the poor parents were.

Cant as we may, and as we shall to the end of all things, it is very much harder for the poor to be virtuous than it is for the rich; and the good that is in them shines the brighter for it. In many a noble mansion lives a man, the best of husbands and of fathers, whose private worth in both capacities is justly lauded to the skies. But bring him here, upon this crowded deck. Strip from his fair young wife her silken dress and jewels, unbind her braided hair, stamp early wrinkles on her brow, pinch her pale cheek with care and much privation, array her faded form in coarsely patched attire, let there be nothing but his love to set her forth or deck her out, and you shall put it to the proof indeed. So change his station in the world, that he shall see in those young things who climb about his knee, not records of his wealth and name, but little wrestlers with him for his daily bread; so many poachers on his scanty meal; so many units to divide his every sum of comfort, and farther to reduce its small amount. In lieu of the endearments of childhood in its sweetest aspect, heap upon him all its pains and wants, its sicknesses and ills, its fretfulness, caprice, and querulous endurance; let its prattle be not of engaging infant fancies, but of cold, and thirst, and hunger: and if his fatherly affection outlive all this, and he be patient, watchful, tender; careful of his children's lives, and mindful always of their joys and sorrows; then send him back to Par-

liament, and Pulpit, and to Quarter Sessions, and when he hears fine talk of the depravity of those who live from hand to mouth, and labour hard to do it, let him speak up, as one who knows, and tell those holders forth that they, by parallel with such a class, should be High Angels in their daily lives, and lay but humble siege to Heaven at last.

Which of us shall say what he would be, if such realities, with small relief or change all through his days, were his! Looking round upon these people; far from home, houseless, indigent, wandering, weary with travel and hard living; and seeing how patiently they nursed and tended their young children; how they consulted ever their wants first, then half supplied their own; what gentle ministers of hope and faith the women were; how the men profited by their example; and how very, very seldom even a moment's petulance or harsh complaint broke out among them: I felt a stronger love and honour of my kind come glowing on my heart, and wished to God there had been many Atheists in the better part of human nature there, to read this simple lesson in the book of Life.

We left Montreal for New York again, on the thirtieth of May; crossing to La Prairie, on the opposite shore of the St. Lawrence, in a steamboat; we then took the railroad to St. John's, which is on the brink of Lake Champlain. Our last greeting in Canada was from the English officers in the pleasant barracks at that place (a class of gentlemen who had made every hour of our visit memorable by their hospitality and friendship); and with "Rule Britannia" sounding in our ears, soon left it far behind.

But Canada has held, and always will retain, a foremost place in my remembrance. Few Englishmen are prepared to find it what it is. Advancing quietly; old differences settling down, and being fast forgotten; public feeling and private enterprise alike in a sound and wholesome state; nothing of flush or fever in its system, but health and vigour throbbing in its steady pulse, it is full of hope and promise. To me — who had been accustomed to think of it as something left behind in the strides of advancing society, as something neglected and forgotten, slumbering and wasting in its sleep — the demand for labour and the rates of wages; the busy quays of Montreal; the vessels taking in their cargoes, and dis-

charging them; the amount of shipping in the different ports; the commerce, roads, and public works, all made *to last*: the respectability and character of the public journals, and the amount of rational comfort and happiness which honest industry may earn, were very great surprises. The steamboats on the lakes, in their conveniences, cleanliness, and safety; in the gentlemanly character and bearing of their captains; and in the politeness and perfect comfort of their social regulations; are unsurpassed even by the famous Scotch vessels, deservedly so much esteemed at home. The inns are usually bad; because the custom of boarding at hotels is not so general here as in the States, and the British officers, who form a large portion of the society of every town, live chiefly at the regimental messes; but in every other respect, the traveller in Canada will find as good provision for his comfort as in any place I know.

There is one American boat — the vessel which carried us on Lake Champlain, from St. John's to Whitehall — which I praise very highly, but no more than it deserves, when I say that it is superior even to that in which we went from Queenston to Toronto, or to that in which we travelled from the latter place to Kingston, or I have no doubt I may add, to any other in the world. This steamboat, which is called the Burlington, is a perfectly exquisite achievement of neatness, elegance, and order. The decks are drawing-rooms; the cabins are boudoirs, choicely furnished and adorned with prints, pictures, and musical instruments; every nook and corner in the vessel is a perfect curiosity of graceful comfort and beautiful contrivance. Captain Sherman, her commander, to whose ingenuity and excellent taste these results are solely attributable, has bravely and worthily distinguished himself on more than one trying occasion — not least among them, in having the moral courage to carry British troops, at a time (during the Canadian rebellion) when no other conveyance was open to them. He and his vessel are held in universal respect, both by his own countrymen and ours; and no man ever enjoyed the popular esteem, who, in his sphere of action, won and wore it better than this gentleman.

By means of this floating palace we were soon in the United States again, and called that evening at Burlington; a pretty town, where we lay an hour or so. We reached Whitehall, where we were to disembark, at six next morning; and might

have done so earlier, but that these steamboats lie by for some hours in the night, in consequence of the lake becoming very narrow at that part of the journey, and difficult of navigation in the dark. Its width is so contracted at one point, indeed, that they are obliged to warp round by means of a rope.

After breakfasting at Whitehall we took the stage-coach for Albany, a large and busy town, where we arrived between five and six o'clock that afternoon; after a very hot day's journey, for we were now in the height of summer again. At seven we started for New York on board a great North River steamboat, which was so crowded with passengers that the upper deck was like the box lobby of a theatre between the pieces, and the lower one like Tottenham Court Road on a Saturday night. But we slept soundly, notwithstanding, and soon after five o'clock next morning reached New York.

Tarrying here only that day and night to recruit after our late fatigues, we started off once more upon our last journey in America. We had yet five days to spare before embarking for England, and I had a great desire to see "the Shaker Village," which is peopled by a religious sect from whom it takes its name.

To this end we went up the North River again, as far as the town of Hudson, and there hired an extra to carry us to Lebanon, thirty miles distant: and of course another and a different Lebanon from that village where I slept on the night of the Prairie trip.

The country through which the road meandered was rich and beautiful; the weather very fine; and for many miles the Kaatskill mountains, where Rip Van Winkle and the ghastly Dutchmen played at ninepins one memorable gusty afternoon, towered in the blue distance like stately clouds. At one point, as we ascended a steep hill, athwart whose base a railroad, yet constructing, took its course, we came upon an Irish colony. With means at hand of building decent cabins, it was wonderful to see how clumsy, rough, and wretched, its hovels were. The best were poor protection from the weather; the worst let in the wind and rain through wide breaches in the roofs of sodden grass, and in the walls of mud; some had neither door nor window; some had nearly fallen down, and were imperfectly propped up by stakes and poles; all were ruinous and filthy. Hideously ugly old women and very buxom young ones, pigs,

dogs, men, children, babies, pots, kettles, dunghills, vile refuse, rank straw, and standing water, all wallowing together in an inseparable heap, composed the furniture of every dark and dirty hut.

Between nine and ten o'clock at night, we arrived at Lebanon; which is renowned for its warm baths, and for a great hotel, well adapted, I have no doubt, to the gregarious taste of those seekers after health or pleasure who repair here, but inexpressibly comfortless to me. We were shown into an immense apartment, lighted by two dim candles, called the drawing-room, from which there was a descent by a flight of steps to another vast desert called the dining-room; our bed-chambers were among certain long rows of little whitewashed cells which opened from either side of a dreary passage, and were so like rooms in a prison that I half expected to be locked up when I went to bed, and listened involuntarily for the turning of the key on the outside. There need be baths somewhere in the neighbourhood, for the other washing arrangements were on as limited a scale as I ever saw, even in America: indeed, these bedrooms were so very bare of even such common luxuries as chairs, that I should say they were not provided with enough of anything, but that I bethink myself of our having been most bountifully bitten all night.

The house is very pleasantly situated, however, and we had a good breakfast. That done, we went to visit our place of destination, which was some two miles off, and the way to which was soon indicated by a finger-post, whereon was painted, "To the Shaker Village."

As we rode along we passed a party of Shakers, who were at work upon the road; who wore the broadest of all broad-brimmed hats, and were in all visible respects such very wooden men, that I felt about as much sympathy for them, and as much interest in them, as if they had been so many figure-heads of ships. Presently we came to the beginning of the village, and alighting at the door of a house where the Shaker manufactures are sold, and which is the headquarters of the elders, requested permission to see the Shaker worship.

Pending the conveyance of this request to some person in authority, we walked into a grim room, where several grim hats were hanging on grim pegs, and the time was grimly told by a grim clock, which uttered every tick with a kind of struggle, as

if it broke the grim silence reluctantly, and under protest. Ranged against the wall were six or eight stiff high-backed chairs, and they partook so strongly of the general grimness, that one would much rather have sat on the floor than incurred the smallest obligation to any of them.

Presently there stalked into this apartment a grim old Shaker, with eyes as hard, and dull, and cold, as the great round metal buttons on his coat and waistcoat; a sort of calm goblin. Being informed of our desire, he produced a newspaper wherein the body of elders, whereof he was a member, had advertised but a few days before, that in consequence of certain unseemly interruptions which their worship had received from strangers, their chapel was closed to the public for the space of one year.

As nothing was to be urged in opposition to this reasonable arrangement, we requested leave to make some trifling purchases of Shaker goods; which was grimly conceded. We accordingly repaired to a store in the same house and on the opposite side of the passage, where the stock was presided over by something alive in a russet case, which the elder said was a woman; and which I suppose *was* a woman, though I should not have suspected it.

On the opposite side of the road was their place of worship: a cool, clean edifice of wood, with large windows and green blinds, like a spacious summer-house. As there was no getting into this place, and nothing was to be done but walk up and down, and look at it and the other buildings in the village (which were chiefly of wood, painted a dark red like English barns, and composed of many stories like English factories), I have nothing to communicate to the reader beyond the scanty results I gleaned the while our purchases were making.

These people are called Shakers from their peculiar form of adoration, which consists of a dance, performed by the men and women of all ages, who arrange themselves for that purpose in opposite parties: the men first divesting themselves of their hats and coats, which they gravely hang against the wall before they begin; and tying a ribbon round their shirt-sleeves, as though they were going to be bled. They accompany themselves with a droning, humming noise, and dance until they are quite exhausted, alternately advancing and retiring in a preposterous sort of trot. The effect is said to be unspeakably absurd;

and if I may judge from a print of this ceremony which I have in my possession, and which I am informed by those who have visited the chapel, is perfectly accurate, it must be very grotesque.

They are governed by a woman, and her rule is considered to be absolute, though she has the assistance of a council of elders. She lives, it is said, in strict seclusion, in certain rooms above the chapel, and is never shown to profane eyes. If she at all resemble the lady who presided over the store, it is a great charity to keep her as close as possible, and I cannot too strongly express my perfect concurrence in this benevolent proceeding.

All the possessions and revenues of the settlement are thrown into a common stock, which is managed by the elders. As they have made converts among people who were well to do in the world, and are frugal and thrifty, it is considered that this fund prospers — the more especially as they have made large purchases of land. Nor is this at Lebanon the only Shaker settlement; there are, I think, at least three others.

They are good farmers, and all their produce is eagerly purchased and highly esteemed. "Shaker seeds," "Shaker herbs," and "Shaker distilled waters," are commonly seen for sale in the shops of towns and cities. They are good breeders of cattle, and are kind and merciful to the brute creation. Consequently, Shaker beasts seldom fail to find a ready market.

They eat and drink together, after the Spartan model, at a great public table. There is no union of the sexes, and every Shaker, male and female, is devoted to a life of celibacy. Rumour has been busy upon this theme, but here again I must refer to the lady of the store, and say, that if many of the sister Shakers resemble her, I treat all such slander as bearing on its face the strongest marks of wild improbability. That they take as proselytes persons so young that they cannot know their own minds, and cannot possess much strength of resolution in this or any other respect, I can assert from my own observation of the extreme juvenility of certain young Shakers whom I saw at work among the party on the road.

They are said to be good drivers of bargains, but to be honest and just in their transactions, and even in business to resist those thievish tendencies which would seem, for a

undiscovered reason, to be almost inseparable from that branch of traffic. In all matters they hold their own course quietly, live in their gloomy silent commonwealth, and show little desire to interfere with other people.

This is well enough, but nevertheless I cannot, I confess, incline towards the Shakers; view them with much favour, or extend towards them any very lenient construction. I so abhor, and from my soul detest that bad spirit, no matter by what class or sect it may be entertained, which would strip life of its healthful graces, rob youth of its innocent pleasures, pluck from maturity and age their pleasant ornaments, and make existence but a narrow path towards the grave; that odious spirit which, if it could have had full scope and sway upon the earth, must have blasted and made barren the imaginations of the greatest men, and left them, in their power of raising up enduring images before their fellow-creatures yet unborn, no better than the beasts; that, in these very broad-brimmed hats and very sombre coats — in stiff-necked solemn-visaged piety, in short, no matter what its garb, whether it have cropped hair as in a Shaker village, or long nails as in a Hindoo temple — I recognise the worst among the enemies of Heaven and Earth, who turn the water at the marriage feasts of this poor world not into wine but gall. And if there must be people vowed to crush the harmless fancies and the love of innocent delights and gaieties, which are a part of human nature — as much a part of it as any other love or hope that is our common portion — let them, for me, stand openly revealed among the ribald and licentious; the very idiots know that *they* are not on the Immortal road, and will despise them, and avoid them readily.

Leaving the Shaker village with a hearty dislike of the old Shakers, and a hearty pity for the young ones, tempered by the strong probability of their running away as they grow older and wiser, which they not uncommonly do; we returned to Lebanon, and so to Hudson, by the way we had come upon the previous day. There we took steamboat down the North River towards New York, but stopped, some four hours' journey short of it, at West Point, where we remained that night, and all next day, and next night too.

In this beautiful place, the fairest among the fair and lovely Highlands of the North River, shut in by deep green heights

and looking down upon the distant town of Newburgh, along a glittering path of sunlit water, with here and there a skiff, whose white sail often bends on some new tack as sudden flaws of wind come down upon her from the gullies in the hills: hemmed in, besides, all round with memories of Washington, and events of the revolutionary war: is the Military School of America.

It could not stand on more appropriate ground, and any ground more beautiful can hardly be. The course of education is severe, but well devised, and manly. Through June, July, and August, the young men encamp upon the spacious plain whereon the college stands; and all the year their military exercises are performed there, daily. The term of study at this institution, which the State requires from all cadets, is four years; but, whether it be from the rigid nature of the discipline, or the national impatience of restraint, or both causes combined, not more than half the number who begin their studies here ever remain to finish them.

The number of cadets being about equal to that of members of Congress, one is sent here from every Congressional district: its member influencing the selection. Commissions in the service are distributed on the same principle. The dwellings of the various Professors are beautifully situated; and there is a most excellent hotel for strangers, though it has the two drawbacks of being a total abstinence house (wines and spirits being forbidden to the students), and of serving the public meals at rather uncomfortable hours: to wit, breakfast at seven, dinner at one, and supper at sunset.

The beauty and freshness of this calm retreat, in the very dawn and greenness of summer—it was then the beginning of June—were exquisite indeed. Leaving it upon the sixth, and returning to New York, to embark for England on the succeeding day, I was glad to think that among the last memorable beauties which had glided past us, and softened in the bright perspective, were those whose pictures, traced by no common hand, are fresh in most men's minds; not easily to grow old, or fade beneath the dust of Time—the Kaatskill Mountains, Sleepy Hollow, and the Tappaan Zee.

CHAPTER XVI

THE PASSAGE HOME.

I NEVER had so much interest before, and very likely I shall never have so much interest again, in the state of the wind, as on the long-looked-for morning of Tuesday the seventh of June. Some nautical authority had told me a day or two previous, "anything with west in it will do;" so when I darted out of bed at daylight, and throwing up the window, was saluted by a lively breeze from the northwest which had sprung up in the night, it came upon me so freshly, rustling with so many happy associations, that I conceived upon the spot a special regard for all airs blowing from that quarter of the compass, which I shall cherish, I dare say, until my own wind has breathed its last frail puff, and withdrawn itself for ever from the mortal calendar.

The pilot had not been slow to take advantage of this favourable weather, and the ship which yesterday had been in such a crowded dock that she might have retired from trade for good and all, for any chance she seemed to have of going to sea, was now full sixteen miles away. A gallant sight she was, when we, fast gaining on her in a steamboat, saw her in the distance riding at anchor — her tall masts pointing up in graceful lines against the sky, and every rope and spar expressed in delicate and thread-like outline; gallant, too, when we, being all aboard, the anchor came up to the sturdy chorus, "Cheerily, men, oh, cheerily!" and she followed proudly in the towing steamboat's wake: but bravest and most gallant of all, when the tow-rope being cast adrift, the canvas fluttered from her masts, and spreading her white wings she soared away upon her free and solitary course.

In the after-cabin we were only fifteen passengers in all, and the greater part were from Canada, where some of us had known each other. The night was rough and squally, so were the next two days; but they flew by quickly, and we were soon

as cheerful and as snug a party, with an h[illegible]nest, [illegible] captain at our head, as ever came to the [illegible] mutually agreeable, on land or water.

We breakfasted at eight, lunched at twelve, d[illegible] at [illegible] and took our tea at half-past seven. We had [illegible] amusements, and dinner was not the least among [illegible] for its own sake; secondly, because of its extra[illegible] its duration, inclusive of all the long pauses between courses, being seldom less than two hours and a half; [illegible] was a subject of never-failing entertainment. By way of beguiling the tediousness of these banquets, a [illegible] was formed at the lower end of the table, [illegible] whose distinguished president modesty forbids me to [illegible] further allusion, which, being a very hilarious [illegible] tution, was (prejudice apart) in high favour with [illegible] the community, and particularly with a black steward, who lived for three weeks in a broad grin at the marvel[illegible] of these incorporated worthies.

Then we had chess for those who played it, whist, [illegible] books, backgammon, and shovelboard. In all weathers, [illegible] foul, calm or windy, we were every one on deck, w[illegible] and down in pairs, lying in the boats, leaning over the [illegible] chatting in a lazy group together. We had no lack of [illegible] for one played the accordion, another the v[illegible] (who usually began at six o'clock A. M.) the ke[illegible] combined effect of which instruments, when they [illegible] different tunes, in different parts of the ship, at the same [illegible] and within hearing of each other, as they [illegible] [illegible] being intensely satisfied with his own performance, w[illegible]

W[illegible]en all these means of entertainment failed, a sail w[illegible] heave in [illegible] [illegible] the very [illegible] [illegible] or passing us so close that [illegible] [illegible] on her deck [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] around the vessel [illegible] [illegible] the Mother Carey's [illegible] [illegible] from New York bay, [illegible] [illegible] at the vessel's stern. [illegible] [illegible] had a dead [illegible], or very light winds, [illegible]

the crew amused themselves with fishing, and hooked an unlucky dolphin, who expired, in all his rainbow colours, on the deck; an event of such importance in our barren calendar, that afterwards we dated from the dolphin, and made the day on which he died an era.

Besides all this, when we were five or six days out, there began to be much talk of icebergs, of which wandering islands an unusual number had been seen by the vessels that had come into New York a day or two before we left that port, and of whose dangerous neighbourhood we were warned by the sudden coldness of the weather, and the sinking of the mercury in the barometer. While these tokens lasted, a double look-out was kept, and many dismal tales were whispered, after dark, of ships that had struck upon the ice and gone down in the night; but the wind obliging us to hold a southward course we saw none of them, and the weather soon grew bright and warm again.

The observation every day at noon, and the subsequent working of the vessel's course, was, as may be supposed, a feature in our lives of paramount importance; nor were there wanting (as there never are) sagacious doubters of the captain's calculations, who, so soon as his back was turned, would, in the absence of compasses, measure the chart with bits of string, and ends of pocket-handkerchiefs, and points of snuffers, and clearly prove him to be wrong by an odd thousand miles or so. It was very edifying to see these unbelievers shake their heads and frown, and hear them hold forth strongly upon navigation; not that they knew anything about it, but that they always mistrusted the captain in calm weather, or when the wind was adverse. Indeed, the mercury itself is not so variable as this class of passengers, whom you will see, when the ship is going nobly through the water, quite pale with admiration, swearing that the captain beats all captains ever known, and even hinting at subscriptions for a piece of plate; and who, next morning, when the breeze has lulled, and all the sails hang useless in the idle air, shake their despondent heads again, and say, with screwed-up lips, they hope that the captain is a sailor — but they shrewdly doubt him.

It even became an occupation in the calm, to wonder when the wind *would* spring up in the favourable quarter where, it was clearly shown by all the rules and precedents, it ought to

have sprung up long ago. The first mate [illegible] it curiosity, was much respected [illegible] regarded even by the unbelievers as a [illegible] gloomy looks would be cast upward [illegible] at the flapping sails while dinner was [illegible] some, growing bold in ruefulness, [illegible] about the middle of July. There [illegible] a Sanguine One, and a Despondent One. [illegible] carried it hollow at this period [illegible] over the Sanguine One at every [illegible] where he supposed the Great Western [illegible] a week after us) was now; and where [illegible] "Cunard" steam-packet was now; and what [illegible] sailing vessels as compared with steamers [illegible] his life with pestilent attacks of that kind [illegible] obliged to affect despondency, for very peace [illegible]

These were additions to the list of entertaining [illegible] but there was still another source of interest. We [illegible] the steerage nearly a hundred passengers — a [illegible] poverty; and as we came to know individuals [illegible] sight, from looking down upon the deck where [illegible] air in the daytime, and cooked their food, [illegible] it too, we became curious to know their [illegible] what expectations they had gone out to America, [illegible] errands they were going home, and what their [illegible] were. The information we got on these heads [illegible] penter, who had charge of these people, was [illegible] strangest kind. Some of them had been in America [illegible] days, some but three months, and some had [illegible] last voyage of that very ship in which they were [illegible] home. Others had sold their clothes to raise the [illegible] money, and had hardly rags to cover them, others [illegible] and lived upon the charity of the rest; and [illegible] discovered nearly at the end of the voyage, not before [illegible] he kept his secret close, and did not court [illegible] had no sustenance whatever but the bones and [illegible] took from the plates used in the after-cabin dinner, [illegible] were put out to be washed.

The whole system of shipping and conveying [illegible] nate persons is one that stands in need of [illegible] If any class deserve to be protected and assisted [illegible]

nment, it is that class who are banished from their native nd in search of the bare means of subsistence. All that ould be done for these poor people by the great compassion ad humanity of the captain and officers was done, but they equire much more. The law is bound, at least upon the nglish side, to see that too many of them are not put on oard one ship; and that their accommodations are decent, not demoralising and profligate. It is bound, too, in common humanity, to declare that no man shall be taken on board without his stock of provisions being previously inspected by some proper officer, and pronounced moderately sufficient for his support upon the voyage. It is bound to provide, or to require that there be provided, a medical attendant; whereas in these ships there are none, though sickness of adults, and deaths of children, on the passage, are matters of the very commonest occurrence. Above all it is the duty of any Government, be it monarchy or republic, to interpose and put an end to that system by which a firm of traders in emigrants purchase of the owners the whole 'tween-decks of a ship, and send on board as many wretched people as they can lay hold of, on any terms they can get, without the smallest reference to the conveniences of the steerage, the number of berths, the slightest separation of the sexes, or anything but their own immediate profit. Nor is even this the worst of the vicious system; for certain crimping agents of these houses, who have a percentage on all the passengers they inveigle, are constantly travelling about those districts where poverty and discontent are rife, and tempting the credulous into more misery, by holding out monstrous inducements to emigration which can never be realised.

The history of every family we had on board was pretty much the same. After hoarding up, and borrowing, and begging, and selling everything to pay the passage, they had gone out to New York, expecting to find its streets paved with gold; and had found them paved with very hard and very real stones. Enterprise was dull; labourers were not wanted; jobs of work were to be got, but the payment was not. They were coming back even poorer than they went. One of them was carrying an open letter from a young English artisan, who had been in New York a fortnight, to a friend near Manchester, whom he strongly urged to follow him. One of the officers

brought it to me as a curiosity. "This is the c[illegible]," said the writer. "I like America. There is [illegible] here; that's the great thing. Employment of a[illegible] going a begging, and wages are capital. Y[illegible] choose a trade, Jem, and be it. I haven't [illegible] one yet, but I shall soon. *At present I ha[illegible] up my mind whether to be a carpenter — or a t[illegible]*"

There was yet another kind of passenger, at [illegible] who, in the calm and the light winds, was a [illegible] of conversation and observation among us. [illegible] lish sailor, a smart, thorough-built, English man [illegible] from his hat to his shoes, who was serving in the [illegible] navy, and having got leave of absence was on his w[illegible] see his friends. When he presented himself to take [illegible] for his passage, it had been suggested to him that [illegible] able seaman he might as well work it and save the [illegible] this piece of advice he very indignantly re[illegible] he'd "be damned but for once he'd go a[illegible] gentleman." Accordingly they took his [illegible] water came aboard, then he stowed his kit in [illegible] arranged to mess with the crew, and the very first [illegible] hands were turned up, went aloft like a cat [illegible] And all through the passage there he was, first at [illegible] outermost on the yards, perpetually lending a h[illegible] where, but always with a sober dignity in his [illegible] sober grin on his face, which plainly said, "I do it as a [illegible] man. For my own pleasure, mind you!"

At length and at last, the promised wind came [illegible] good earnest, and away we went before it, with every [illegible] [illegible] through the water [illegible] [illegible] of the splendid [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] a foaming [illegible] to see the green waves, bedewed deep with [illegible] [illegible] upward at their [illegible] [illegible] again, but always [illegible] [illegible] on we flew, [illegible] [illegible] in the [illegible] [illegible] is by day and [illegible] [illegible] homeward, [illegible]

index to the favouring wind and to our cheerful hearts; until at sunrise, one fair Monday morning, — the twenty-seventh of June, I shall not easily forget the day, — there lay before us old Cape Clear, God bless it, showing, in the mist of early morning like a cloud; the brightest and most welcome cloud, to us, that ever hid the face of Heaven's fallen sister — Home.

Dim speck as it was in the wide prospect, it made the sunrise a more cheerful sight, and gave to it that sort of human interest which it seems to want at sea. There, as elsewhere, the return of day is inseparable from some sense of renewed hope and gladness; but the light shining on the dreary waste of water, and showing it in all its vast extent of loneliness, presents a solemn spectacle, which even night, veiling it in darkness and uncertainty, does not surpass. The rising of the moon is more in keeping with the solitary ocean; and has an air of melancholy grandeur, which in its soft and gentle influence seems to comfort while it saddens. I recollect when I was a very young child having a fancy that the reflection of the moon in water was a path to Heaven, trodden by the spirits of good people on their way to God; and this old feeling often came over me again, when I watched it on a tranquil night at sea.

The wind was very light on this same Monday morning, but it was still in the right quarter, and so, by slow degrees, we left Cape Clear behind, and sailed along within sight of the coast of Ireland. And how merry we all were, and how loyal to the George Washington, and how full of mutual congratulations, and how venturesome in predicting the exact hour at which we should arrive at Liverpool, may be easily imagined and readily understood. Also, how heartily we drank the captain's health that day at dinner, and how restless we became about packing up; and how two or three of the most sanguine spirits rejected the idea of going to bed at all that night as something it was not worth while to do, so near the shore, but went nevertheless, and slept soundly; and how to be so near our journey's end, was like a pleasant dream, from which one feared to wake.

The friendly breeze freshened again next day, and on we went once more before it gallantly: descrying now and then an English ship going homeward under shortened sail, while we with every inch of canvas crowded on, dashed gaily past, and left her far behind. Towards evening, the weather turned

means, "I will not tolerate a man above me; and of those below, none must approach too near;" whose pride, in a land where voluntary servitude is shunned as a disgrace, must be ministered to by slaves; and whose inalienable rights can only have their growth in negro wrongs.

It has been sometimes urged that, in the unavailing efforts which have been made to advance the cause of Human Freedom in the republic of America (strange cause for history to treat of!), sufficient regard has not been had to the existence of the first class of persons; and it has been contended that they are hardly used, in being confounded with the second. This is, no doubt, the case; noble instances of pecuniary and personal sacrifice have already had their growth among them; and it is much to be regretted that the gulf between them and the advocates of emancipation should have been widened and deepened by any means; the rather, as there are, beyond dispute, among these slave-owners, many kind masters who are tender in the exercise of their unnatural power. Still it is to be feared that this injustice is inseparable from the state of things with which humanity and truth are called upon to deal. Slavery is not a whit the more endurable because some hearts are to be found which can partially resist its hardening influences; nor can the indignant tide of honest wrath stand still, because in its onward course it overwhelms a few who are comparatively innocent, among a host of guilty.

The ground most commmonly taken by these better men among the advocates of slavery is this: "It is a bad system: and for myself I would willingly get rid of it, if I could; most willingly. But it is not so bad as you in England take it to be. You are deceived by the representations of the emancipationists. The greater part of my slaves are much attached to me. You will say that I do not allow them to be severely treated; but I will put it to you whether you believe that it can be a general practice to treat them inhumanly, when it would impair their value, and would be obviously against the interests of their masters."

Is it the interest of any man to steal, to game, to waste his health and mental faculties by drunkenness, to lie, forswear himself, indulge hatred, seek desperate revenge, or do murder? No. All these are roads to ruin. And why then, do men tread them? Because such inclinations are among the vicious

qualities of mankind. Blot out, ye friends of slavery, from the catalogue of human passions, brutal lust, cruelty, and the abuse of irresponsible power (of all earthly temptations the most difficult to be resisted), and when ye have done so, and not before, we will inquire whether it be the interest of a master to lash and maim the slaves, over whose lives and limbs he has an absolute control!

But again: this class, together with that last one I have named, the miserable aristocracy spawned of a false republic, lift up their voices and exclaim, "Public opinion is all sufficient to prevent such cruelty as you denounce." Public opinion! Why, public opinion in the slave States *is* slavery, is it not? Public opinion in the slave States has delivered the slaves over to the gentle mercies of their masters. Public opinion has made the laws, and denied the slaves legislative protection. Public opinion has knotted the lash, heated the branding-iron, loaded the rifle, and shielded the murderer. Public opinion threatens the abolitionist with death, if he venture to the South; and drags him with a rope about his middle, in broad unblushing noon, through the first city in the East. Public opinion has, within a few years, burned a slave alive at a slow fire in the city of St. Louis; and public opinion has to this day maintained upon the bench that estimable Judge who charged the Jury, impanelled there to try his murderers, that their most horrid deed was an act of public opinion, and being so, must not be punished by the laws the public sentiment had made. Public opinion hailed this doctrine with a howl of wild applause, and set the prisoners free, to walk the city, men of mark, and influence, and station as they had been before.

Public opinion! what class of men have an immense preponderance over the rest of the community, in their power of representing public opinion in the legislature? the slave owners. They send from their twelve States one hundred members, while the fourteen free States, with a free population nearly double, return but a hundred and forty-two. Before whom do the presidential candidates bow down the most humbly, on whom do they fawn the most fondly, and for whose tastes do they cater the most assiduously in their servile protestations? The slave owners always.

Public opinion! hear the public opinion of the free South, as expressed by its own members in the House of Representatives

at Washington. "I have a great respect for the chair," quoth North Carolina, "I have a great respect for the chair as an officer of the house, and a great respect for him personally; nothing but that respect prevents me from rushing to the table and tearing that petition which has just been presented for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, to pieces."— "I warn the abolitionists," says South Carolina, "ignorant, infuriated barbarians as they are, that if chance shall throw any of them into our hand, he may expect a felon's death."— "Let an abolitionist come within the borders of South Carolina," cries a third, mild Carolina's colleague, "and if we can catch him, we will try him, and notwithstanding the interference of all the governments on earth, including the Federal government, we will HANG him."

Public opinion has made this law. — It has declared that in Washington, in that city which takes its name from the father of American liberty, any justice of the peace may bind with fetters any negro passing down the street and thrust him into jail: no offence on the black man's part is necessary. The justice says, "I choose to think this man a runaway;" and locks him up. Public opinion empowers the man of law when this is done, to advertise the negro in the newspapers, warning his owner to come and claim him, or he will be sold to pay the jail fees. But supposing he is a free black, and has no owner, it may naturally be presumed that he is set at liberty. No: HE IS SOLD TO RECOMPENSE HIS JAILER. This has been done again, and again, and again. He has no means of proving his freedom; has no adviser, messenger, or assistance of any sort or kind; no investigation into his case is made, or inquiry instituted. He, a free man, who may have served for years, and bought his liberty, is thrown into jail on no process, for no crime, and on no pretence of crime: and is sold to pay the jail fees. This seems incredible, even of America, but it is the law.

Public opinion is deferred to, in such cases as the following: which is headed in the newspapers: —

"*Interesting Law-Case.*

"An interesting case is now on trial in the Supreme Court, arising out of the following facts. A gentleman residing in

Maryland had allowed an aged pair of his slaves substantial though not legal freedom for several years. While thus living a daughter was born to them, who grew up in the same liberty until she married a free negro and went with him to reside in Pennsylvania. They had several children, and lived unmolested until the original owner died, when his heir attempted to regain them; but the magistrate before whom they were brought decided that he had no jurisdiction in the case. *The owner seized the woman and her children in the night, and carried them to Maryland.*"

"Cash for negroes," "cash for negroes," "cash for negroes," is the heading of advertisements in great capitals down the long columns of the crowded journals. Woodcuts of a runaway negro with manacled hands, crouching beneath a bluff pursuer in top-boots, who having caught him, grasps him by the throat, agreeably diversify the pleasant text. The leading article protests against "that abominable and hellish doctrine of abolition, which is repugnant alike to every law of God and nature." The delicate mama, who smiles her acquiescence in this sprightly writing as she reads the paper in her cool piazza, quiets her youngest child who clings about her skirts, by promising the boy "a whip to beat the little niggers with." — But the negroes, little and big, are protected by public opinion.

Let us try this public opinion by another test, which is important in three points of view: first, as showing how desperately timid of the public opinion slave owners are, in their delicate descriptions of fugitive slaves in widely circulated newspapers; secondly, as showing how perfectly contented the slaves are, and how very seldom they run away; thirdly, as exhibiting their entire freedom from scar, or blemish, or any mark of cruel infliction, as their pictures are drawn, not by lying abolitionists, but by their own truthful masters.

The following are a few specimens of the advertisements in the public papers. It is only four years since the oldest among them appeared; and others of the same nature continue to be published every day, in shoals.

"Ran away, Negress Caroline. Had on a collar with one prong turned down."

"Ran away, a black woman, Betsy. Had an iron bar on her right leg."

"Ran away, the negro Manuel. [illegible]

"Ran away, the negress Fanny. Had on an [illegible] about her neck."

"Ran away, a negro boy about twelve years [illegible] a chain [illegible] with 'De La [illegible]'"

"Ran away, the negro Hewn. Has a ring [illegible] left foot. Also Grise, his wife, having a ring [illegible]"

"Ran away, a negro boy named James. Said [illegible] when he left me."

"[illegible] to jail, a man who calls his name J[illegible] has a ring of iron on his right foot which will [illegible]"

"[illegible] at the police jail, the negro wench, Myra. [illegible] marks of LASHING, and has irons on her feet."

"Ran away, a negro woman and two children. A few [illegible] went off, I burnt her with a hot iron, on the [illegible] of her face. I tried to make the letter M."

"Ran away, a negro man named Henry. His left eye [illegible] from a dirk on and under his left arm, and [illegible] with the whip."

"[illegible] reward, for a negro fellow, [illegible] 40 years old. He is branded on the left jaw."

"[illegible] to jail, a negro man. Has no toes on the [illegible] foot."

"Ran away, a negro woman named Rachel. Has lost [illegible] her toes except the large one."

"Ran away, Sam. He was shot a short time [illegible] the hand, and has several shots in his left arm and [illegible]"

"Ran away, my negro man Dennis. Said negro has been shot in the left arm between the shoulders and elbow, [illegible] has [illegible] the left hand."

"Ran away, my negro man named Simon. He has been shot [illegible] in his back and right arm."

"Ran away, a negro named Arthur. Has a [illegible] scar across his breast and each arm, made by a knife [illegible] talk much of the goodness of God."

"Twenty five dollars reward for my man Isaac. He has a scar on his forehead, caused by a blow, and one on his back [illegible] by a shot from a pistol."

"Ran away, a negro girl called Mary. Has a small scar over her eye, a good many teeth missing, the letter A is branded on her cheek and forehead."

"Ran away, negro Ben. Has a scar on his right hand; his thumb and forefinger being injured by being shot last fall. A part of the bone came out. He has also one or two large scars on his back and hips."

"Detained at the jail, a mulatto, named Tom. Has a scar on the right cheek, and appears to have been burned with powder on the face."

"Ran away, a negro man named Ned. Three of his fingers are drawn into the palm of his hand by a cut. Has a scar on the back of his neck, nearly half round, done by a knife."

"Was committed to jail, a negro man. Says his name is Josiah. His back very much scarred by the whip; and branded on the thigh and hips in three or four places, thus (J. M). The rim of his right ear has been bit or cut off."

"Fifty dollars reward, for my fellow Edward. He has a scar on the corner of his mouth, two cuts on and under his arm, and the letter E on his arm."

"Ran away, negro boy Ellie. Has a scar on one of his arms from the bite of a dog."

"Ran away, from the plantation of James Surgette, the following negroes: Randal, has one ear cropped; Bob, has lost one eye; Kentucky Tom, has one jaw broken."

"Ran away, Anthony. One of his ears cut off, and his left hand cut with an axe."

"Fifty dollars reward for the negro Jim Blake. Has a piece cut out of each ear, and the middle finger of the left hand cut off to the second joint."

"Ran away, a negro woman named Maria. Has a scar on one side of her cheek, by a cut. Some scars on her back."

"Ran away, the mulatto wench Mary. Has a cut on the left arm, a scar on the left shoulder, and two upper teeth missing."

I should say, perhaps, in explanation of this latter piece of description, that among the other blessings which public opinion secures to the negroes, is the common practice of violently punching out their teeth. To make them wear iron collars by day and night, and to worry them with dogs, are practices almost too ordinary to deserve mention.

"Ran away, my man Fountain. Has holes in his ears, a scar on the right side of his forehead, has been shot in the hind parts of his legs, and is marked on the back with the whip."

"Two hundred and fifty dollars reward for my negro man Jim. He is much marked with shot in his right thigh. The shot entered on the outside, halfway between the hip and knee joints."

"Brought to jail, John. Left ear cropt."

"Taken up, a negro man. Is very much scarred about the face and body, and has the left ear bit off."

"Ran away, a black girl named Mary. Has a scar on her cheek, and the end of one of her toes cut off."

"Ran away, my mulatto woman Judy. She has had her right arm broke."

"Ran away, my negro man Levi. His left hand has been burnt, and I think the end of his forefinger is off."

"Ran away, a negro man NAMED WASHINGTON. Has lost a part of his middle finger, and the end of his little finger."

"Twenty-five dollars reward for my man John. The tip of his nose is bit off."

"Twenty-five dollars reward for the negro slave, Sally. Walks as though crippled in the back."

"Ran away, Joe Dennis. Has a small notch in one of his ears."

"Ran away, negro boy Jack. Has a small crop out of his left ear."

"Ran away, a negro man named Ivory. Has a small piece cut out of the top of each ear."

While upon the subject of ears, I may observe that a distinguished abolitionist in New York once received a negro's ear, which had been cut off close to the head, in a general post letter. It was forwarded by the free and independent gentleman who had caused it to be amputated, with a polite request that he would place the specimen in his "collection."

I could enlarge this catalogue with broken arms, and broken legs, and gashed flesh, and missing teeth, and lacerated backs, and bites of dogs, and brands of red-hot irons innumerable: but as my readers will be sufficiently sickened and repelled already, I will turn to another branch of the subject.

These advertisements, of which a similar collection

be made for every year, and month, and week, and day, and which are coolly read in families as things of course, and as a part of the current news and small talk, will serve to show how very much the slaves profit by public opinion, and how tender it is in their behalf. But it may be worth while to inquire how the slave owners, and the class of society to which great numbers of them belong, defer to public opinion in their conduct, not to their slaves but to each other; how they are accustomed to restrain their passions; what their bearing is among themselves; whether they are fierce or gentle, whether their social customs be brutal, sanguinary, and violent, or bear the impress of civilisation and refinement.

That we may have no partial evidence from abolitionists in this inquiry, either, I will once more turn to their own newspapers, and I will confine myself, this time, to a selection from paragraphs which appeared from day to day, during my visit to America, and which refer to occurrences happening while I was there. The italics in these extracts, as in the foregoing, are my own.

These cases did not ALL occur, it will be seen, in territory actually belonging to legalised Slave States, though most and those the very worst among them did, as their counterparts constantly do; but the position of the scenes of action in reference to places immediately at hand, where slavery is the law, and the strong resemblance between that class of outrages and the rest, lead to the just presumption that the character of the parties concerned was formed in slave districts, and brutalised by slave customs.

"*Horrible Tragedy.*

"By a slip from 'The Southport Telegraph,' Wisconsin, we learn that the Hon. Charles C. P. Arndt, Member of the Council for Brown county, was shot dead *on the floor of the Council chamber*, by James R. Vinyard, Member from Grant county. *The affair* grew out of a nomination for Sheriff of Grant county. Mr. E. S. Baker was nominated and supported by Mr. Arndt. This nomination was opposed by Vinyard, who wanted the appointment to vest in his own brother. In the course of debate, the deceased made some statements which Vinyard pronounced false, and made use of violent and insult-

ing language, dealing largely in personalities, to wh[illegible] made no reply. After the adjournment, Mr A[illegible] to Vinyard, and requested him to retract, which he [illegible] do, repeating the offensive words. Mr. Arndt [illegible] blow at Vinyard, who stepped back a pace, drew a [illegible] shot him dead.

"The issue appears to have been provoked on [illegible] Vinyard, who was determined at all hazards [illegible] appointment of Baker, and who, himself defeated, [illegible] ire and revenge upon the unfortunate Arndt."

"*The Wisconsin Tragedy.*

"Public indignation runs high in the territory of W[illegible] in relation to the murder of C. C. P. Arndt, in [illegible] tive Hall of the Territory. Meetings have been [illegible] ent counties of Wisconsin, denouncing *the practice [illegible] bearing arms in the Legislative chambers of [illegible]* We have seen the account of the expulsion of James R. [illegible] yard, the perpetrator of the bloody deed, and are [illegible] hear that, after this expulsion by those who saw V[illegible] Mr. Arndt in the presence of his aged father, [illegible] visit to see his son, little dreaming that he was [illegible] murder, *Judge Dunn has discharged Vinyard on [illegible]* [illegible] Miners' Free Press speaks *in terms of merited [illegible]* outrage upon the feelings of the people of W[illegible] yard was within arm's length of Mr. Arndt, [illegible] such deadly aim at him that he never spoke [illegible] at pleasure, being so near, have only wounded [illegible] chose to kill him."

"*Murder.*

"By a letter in a St. Louis paper of the 14th, we [illegible] terrible outrage at Burlington, Iowa. A Mr. [illegible] had a difficulty with a citizen of the place, Mr R[illegible] in-law of the latter provided himself with one of [illegible] ing pistols, met Mr. B. in the street, *and discharged [illegible] tents of five of the barrels at him each [illegible]* Mr. B., though horribly wounded, and dying, [illegible] fire, and killed Ross on the spot."

"*Terrible Death of Robert Potter.*

"From the 'Caddo Gazette,' of the 12th inst. we learn the frightful death of Colonel Robert Potter. . . . He was beset in his house by an enemy named Rose. He sprang from his couch, seized his gun, and, in his night clothes, rushed from the house. For about two hundred yards his speed seemed to defy his pursuers; but, getting entangled in a thicket, he was captured. Rose told him *that he intended to act a generous part*, and give him a chance for his life. He then told Potter he might run, and he should not be interrupted till he reached a certain distance. Potter started at the word of command, and before a gun was fired he had reached the lake. His first impulse was to jump in the water and dive for it, which he did. Rose was close behind him, and formed his men on the bank ready to shoot him as he rose. In a few seconds he came up to breathe; and scarce had his head reached the surface of the water when it was completely riddled with the shot of their guns, and he sunk, to rise no more!"

"*Murder in Arkansas.*

"We understand *that a severe rencontre came off* a few days since in the Seneca Nation, between Mr. Loose, the sub-agent of the mixed band of the Senecas, Quapaw, and Shawnees, and Mr. James Gillespie, of the mercantile firm of Thomas G. Allison and Co., of Maysville, Benton County, Ark., in which the latter was slain with a bowie-knife. Some difficulty had for some time existed between the parties. It is said that Major Gillespie brought on the attack with a cane. A severe conflict ensued, during which two pistols were fired by Gillespie and one by Loose. Loose then stabbed Gillespie with one of those never failing weapons, a bowie-knife. The death of Major G. is much regretted, as he was a liberal-minded and energetic man. Since the above was in type, we have learned that Major Allison has stated to some of our citizens in town that Mr. Loose gave the first blow. We forbear to give any particulars, as *the matter will be the subject of judicial investigation.*"

"*Foul Deed.*

"The steamer Thames, just from M[illegible] brought a handbill, offering a reward of 500 d[illegible] assassinated Lilburn W. Baggs, late Governor [illegible] Independence, on the night of the 6th inst. [illegible] it is stated in a written memorandum, was [illegible] tally wounded.

"Since the above was written, we received a [illegible] clerk of the Thames, giving the f[illegible] Baggs was shot by some villain on Friday, [illegible] evening, while sitting in a room in his own [illegible] dence. His son, a boy, hearing a report, ran [illegible] and found the Governor sitting in his chair with [illegible] down, and his head leaning back, on [illegible] done his father he gave the alarm. [illegible] the garden below the window, and a pistol [illegible] to have been overloaded, and thrown from [illegible] scoundrel who fired it. Three buck shots [illegible] effect; one going through his mouth, [illegible] another probably in or near the brain, [illegible] part of the neck and head. The Governor was [illegible] the morning of the 7th; but no hope for his [illegible] friends, and but slight hopes from his physicians.

"A man was suspected, and the Sheriff [illegible] possession of him by this time.

"The pistol was one of a pair stolen [illegible] from a baker in Independence, and the legal [illegible] the description of the other."

"*Rencontre.*

"An unfortunate affair took place on Friday [illegible] Chartres Street, in which one of our [illegible] received a [illegible] wound from a [illegible] From the [illegible] New Orleans of yesterday, we [illegible] [illegible] It appears that an article was [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the American [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] W[illegible] [illegible]

of those persons who were out all night preserving the peace of the city. Major C. Gally, commander of the battalion, resenting this, called at the office and demanded the author's name; that of M. P. Arpin was given to him, who was absent at the time. Some angry words then passed with one of the proprietors and a challenge followed; the friends of both parties tried to arrange the affair, but failed to do so. On Friday evening, about seven o'clock, Major Gally met Mr. P. Arpin in Chartres Street, and accosted him. 'Are you Mr. Arpin?'

"'Yes, sir.'

"'Then I have to tell you that you are a—'" (applying an appropriate epithet.)

"'I shall remind you of your words, sir.'

"'But I have said I would break my cane on your shoulders.'

"'I know it, but I have not yet received the blow.'

"At these words Major Gally, having a cane in his hands, struck Mr. Arpin across the face, and the latter drew a poignard from his pocket and stabbed Major Gally in the abdomen.

"Fears are entertained that the wound will be mortal. *We understand that Mr. Arpin has given security for his appearance at the Criminal Court to answer the charge.*"

"*Affray in Mississippi.*

"On the 27th ult., in an affray near Carthage, Leake county, Mississippi, between James Cottingham and John Wilburn, the latter was shot by the former, and so horribly wounded that there was no hope of his recovery. On the 2d instant, there was an affray at Carthage between A. C. Sharkey and George Goff, in which the latter was shot, and thought mortally wounded. Sharkey delivered himself up to the authorities, *but changed his mind and escaped!*"

"*Personal Encounter.*

"An encounter took place in Sparta, a few days since, between the barkeeper of an hotel, and a man named Bury. It appears that Bury had become somewhat noisy, *and that the barkeeper, determined to preserve order, had threatened*

to shoot Bury, whereupon Bury drew a pistol and [illegible] barkeeper down. He was not dead at the last [illegible] slight hopes were entertained of his recovery."

"*Duel.*

"The clerk of the steamboat Tribune [illegible] another duel was fought on Tuesday last, by Mr. [illegible] bank officer in Vicksburg, and Mr. Fall, the [illegible] 'Vicksburg Sentinel.' According to the arrangement, [illegible] ties had six pistols each, which, after the word [illegible] *were to discharge as fast as they pleased.* [illegible] pistols without effect. Mr. Robbins's first shot took [illegible] Fall's thigh, who fell, and was unable to continue [illegible]

"*Affray in Clarke County.*

"An *unfortunate affray* occurred in Clarke [illegible] near Waterloo, on Tuesday the 19th ult., which [illegible] settling the partnership concerns of Messrs. M Kane [illegible] M Allister, who had been engaged in the business of [illegible] and resulted in the death of the latter, who was [illegible] Mr. M Kane, because of his attempting to take possession [illegible] seven barrels of whiskey, the property of M Kane, [illegible] been knocked off to M Allister at a sheriff's sale at [illegible] per barrel. M Kane immediately fled, *and at the [illegible] had not been taken.*

"*This unfortunate affray* caused considerable [illegible] in the neighbourhood, as both the parties were men [illegible] families depending upon them and stood well in the [illegible] nity."

I will quote but one more paragraph, which, by reason [illegible] its monstrous absurdity, may be a relief to these atro[illegible] deeds.

"*Affair of Honour.*

"We have just heard the particulars of a meeting which took place on Six Mile Island, on Tuesday, between two [illegible] blossoms of our city, Samuel Thurston, *aged fifteen*, and W[illegible] [illegible] Hine, *aged thirteen years.* They were attended [illegible]

young gentlemen of the same age. The weapons used on the occasion were a couple of Dickson's best rifles; the distance, thirty yards. They took one fire, without any damage being sustained by either party, except the ball of Thurston's gun passing through the crown of Hine's hat. *Through the intercession of the Board of Honour*, the challenge was withdrawn, and the difference amicably adjusted."

If the reader will picture to himself the kind of Board of Honour which amicably adjusted the difference between these two little boys, who in any other part of the world would have been amicably adjusted on two porters' backs and soundly flogged with birchen rods, he will be possessed, no doubt, with as strong a sense of its ludicrous character as that which sets me laughing whenever its image rises up before me.

Now I appeal to every human mind, imbued with the commonest of common sense, and the commonest of common humanity; to all dispassionate, reasoning creatures, of any shade of opinion; and ask, with these revolting evidences of the state of society which exists in and about the slave districts of America before them, can they have a doubt of the real condition of the slave, or can they for a moment make a compromise between the institution or any of its flagrant fearful features, and their own just consciences? Will they say of any tale of cruelty and horror, however aggragated in degree, that it is improbable, when they can turn to the public prints, and, running, read such signs as these, laid before them by the men who rule the slaves — in their own acts, and under their own hands?

Do we not know that the worst deformity and ugliness of slavery are at once the cause and the effect of the reckless licence taken by these free-born outlaws? Do we not know that the man who has been born and bred among its wrongs; who has seen in his childhood husbands obliged at the word of command to flog their wives; women, indecently compelled to hold up their own garments that men might lay the heavier stripes upon their legs, driven and harried by brutal overseers in their time of travail, and becoming mothers on the field of toil, under the very lash itself; who has read in youth, and seen his virgin sisters read, descriptions of runaway men and women, and their disfigured persons, which could not be pub-

[illegible] elsewhere, of so much stock upon a farm, [illegible] of waste — do we not know that that man, whenever his wrath is kindled up, will be a brutal savage? Do we not know that as he is a coward in his domestic life, stalking among his shrinking men and women slaves armed with his heavy whip, so he will be a coward out of doors, and, carrying cowards' weapons hidden in his breast, will shoot men down and stab them when he quarrels? And if our reason did not teach us this and much beyond; if we were such idiots as to close our eyes to that fine mode of training which rears up such men; should we not know that they who among their equals stab and pistol in the legislative halls, and in the counting-house, and on the market-place, and in all the elsewhere peaceful pursuits of life, must be to their dependents, even though they were free servants, so many merciless and unrelenting tyrants?

What! shall we declaim against the ignorant peasantry of Ireland, and mince the matter when these American taskmasters are in question? Shall we cry shame on the brutality of those who hamstring cattle: and spare the lights of Freedom upon earth who notch the ears of men and women, cut pleasant posies in the shrinking flesh, learn to write with pens of red-hot iron on the human face, rack their poetic fancies for liveries of mutilation which their slaves shall wear for life and carry to the grave, breaking living limbs as did the soldiery who mocked and slew the Saviour of the world, and set defenceless creatures up for targets! Shall we whimper over legends of the tortures practised on each other by the Pagan Indians, and smile upon the cruelties of Christian men! Shall we, so long as these things last, exult above the scattered remnants of that race, and triumph in the white enjoyment of their possessions? Rather, for me, restore the forest and the Indian village; in lieu of stars and stripes, let some poor feather flutter in the breeze; replace the streets and squares by wigwams; and though the death-song of a hundred haughty warriors fill the air, it will be music to the shriek of one unhappy slave.

On one theme, which is commonly before our eyes, and in respect of which our national character is changing fast, let the plain Truth be spoken, and let us not, like dastards, beat about the bush by hinting at the Spaniard and the fierce Italian. When knives are drawn by Englishmen in conflict let it be

and known: "We owe this change to Republican Slavery. These are the weapons of Freedom. With sharp points and edges such as these, Liberty in America hews and hacks her slaves; or, failing that pursuit, her sons devote them to a better use, and turn them on each other."

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

There are many passages in this book, where I have been at some pains to resist the temptation of troubling my readers with my own deductions and conclusions: preferring that they should judge for themselves, from such premises as I have laid before them. My only object in the outset, was, to carry them with me faithfully wheresoever I went: and that task I have discharged.

But I may be pardoned, if on such a theme as the general character of the American people, and the general character of their social system, as presented to a stranger's eyes, I desire to express my own opinions in a few words, before I bring these volumes to a close.

They are, by nature, frank, brave, cordial, hospitable, and affectionate. Cultivation and refinement seem but to enhance their warmth of heart and ardent enthusiasm; and it is the possession of these latter qualities in a most remarkable degree, which renders an educated American one of the most endearing and most generous of friends. I never was so won upon, as by this class; never yielded up my full confidence and esteem so readily and pleasurably as to them; never can make again, in half a year, so many friends for whom I seem to entertain the regard of half a life.

These qualities are natural, I implicitly believe, to the whole people. That they are, however, sadly sapped and blighted in their growth among the mass; and that there are influences at work which endanger them still more, and give but little present promise of their healthy restoration; is a truth that ought to be told.

It is an essential part of every national character to pique itself mightily upon its faults, and to deduce tokens of its virtue or its wisdom from their very exaggeration. One great blemish in the popular mind of America, and the prolific parent

of an innumerable brood of evils, is Universal Distrust. Yet the American citizen plumes himself upon this spirit, even when he is sufficiently dispassionate to perceive the ruin it works; and will often adduce it, in spite of his own reason, as an instance of the great sagacity and acuteness of the people, and their superior shrewdness and independence.

"You carry," says the stranger, "this jealousy and distrust into every transaction of public life. By repelling worthy men from your legislative assemblies, it has bred up a class of candidates for the suffrage, who, in their every act, disgrace your Institutions and your people's choice. It has rendered you so fickle, and so given to change, that your inconstancy has passed into a proverb; for you no sooner set up an idol firmly than you are sure to pull it down and dash it into fragments: and this, because directly you reward a benefactor, or a public servant, you distrust him, merely because he *is* rewarded; and immediately apply yourselves to find out, either that you have been too bountiful in your acknowledgments, or he remiss in his deserts. Any man who attains a high place among you, from the President downwards, may date his downfall from that moment; for any printed lie that any notorious villain pens, although it militate directly against the character and conduct of a life, appeals at once to your distrust, and is believed. You will strain at a gnat in the way of trustfulness and confidence, however fairly won and well deserved; but you will swallow a whole caravan of camels, if they be laden with unworthy doubts and mean suspicions. Is this well, think you, or likely to elevate the character of the governors or the governed among you?"

The answer is invariably the same: "There's freedom of opinion here, you know. Every man thinks for himself, and we are not to be easily overreached. That's how our people come to be suspicious."

Another prominent feature is the love of "smart" dealing, which gilds over many a swindle and gross breach of trust, many a defalcation, public and private; and enables many a knave to hold his head up with the best, who well deserves a halter: though it has not been without its retributive operation, for this smartness has done more in a few years to impair the public credit, and to cripple the public resources, than dull honesty, however rash, could have effected in a century. The

merits of a broken speculation, or a bankruptcy, or of a successful scoundrel, are not gauged by its or his observance of the golden rule, "Do as you would be done by," but are considered with reference to their smartness. I recollect, on both occasions of our passing that ill-fated Cairo on the Mississippi, remarking on the bad effects such gross deceits must have when they exploded, in generating a want of confidence abroad, and discouraging foreign investment; but I was given to understand that this was a very smart scheme by which a deal of money had been made, and that its smartest feature was, that they forgot these things abroad, in a very short time, and speculated again as freely as ever. The following dialogue I have held a hundred times: "Is it not a very disgraceful circumstance that such a man as So-and-so should be acquiring a large property by the most infamous and odious means, and notwithstanding all the crimes of which he has been guilty, should be tolerated and abetted by your Citizens? He is a public nuisance, is he not?" "Yes, sir." "A convicted liar?" "Yes, sir." "He has been kicked, and cuffed, and caned?" "Yes, sir." "And he is utterly dishonourable, debased, and profligate?" "Yes, sir." "In the name of wonder, then, what is his merit?" "Well, sir, he is a smart man."

In like manner, all kinds of deficient and impolitic usages are referred to the national love of trade; though, oddly enough, it would be a weighty charge against a foreigner that he regarded the Americans as a trading people. The love of trade is assigned as a reason for that comfortless custom, so very prevalent in country towns, of married persons living in hotels, having no fireside of their own, and seldom meeting from early morning until late at night, but at the hasty public meals. The love of trade is a reason why the literature of America is to remain for ever unprotected, — "For we are a trading people, and don't care for poetry," though we do, by the way, profess to be very proud of our poets; while healthful amusements, cheerful means of recreation, and wholesome fancies, must fade before the stern utilitarian joys of trade.

These three characteristics are strongly presented at every turn, full in the stranger's view. But the foul growth of America has a more tangled root than this, and it strikes its fibres deep in its licentious Press.

Schools may be erected, East, West, North, and South; pupils be taught, and masters reared, by scores upon scores of thousands; colleges may thrive, churches may be crammed, temperance may be diffused, and advancing knowledge in all other forms walk through the land with giant strides; but while the newspaper press of America is in, or near, its present abject state, high moral improvement in that country is hopeless. Year by year it must and will go back; year by year the tone of public feeling must sink lower down; year by year the Congress and the Senate must become of less account before all decent men; and year by year the memory of the Great Fathers of the Revolution must be outraged more and more, in the bad life of their degenerate child.

Among the herd of journals which are published in the States, there are some, the reader scarcely need be told, of character and credit. From personal intercourse with accomplished gentlemen connected with publications of this class, I have derived both pleasure and profit. But the name of these is Few, and of the others Legion; and the influence of the good is powerless to counteract the mortal poison of the bad.

Among the gentry of America; among the well-informed and moderate; in the learned professions; at the bar and on the bench; there is, as there can be, but one opinion, in reference to the vicious character of these infamous journals. It is sometimes contended — I will not say strangely, for it is natural to seek excuses for such a disgrace — that their influence is not so great as a visitor would suppose. I must be pardoned for saying that there is no warrant for this plea, and that every fact and circumstance tends directly to the opposite conclusion.

When any man of any grade of desert in intellect or character can climb to any public distinction, no matter what, in America, without first grovelling down upon the earth, and bending the knee before this monster of depravity; when any private excellence is safe from its attacks; when any social confidence is left unbroken by it, or any tie of social decency and honour is held in the least regard; when any man in that Free Country has freedom of opinion, and presumes to think for himself, and speak for himself, without humble reference to a censorship which, for its rampant ignorance and base dishonesty, he utterly loathes and despises in his heart; when

those who most acutely feel its infamy and the reproach it casts upon the nation, and who most denounce it to each other, dare to set their heels upon, and crush it openly, in the sight of all men: then I will believe that its influence is lessening, and men are returning to their manly senses. But while that Press has its evil eye in every house, and its black hand in every appointment in the state, from a president to a postman; while, with ribald slander for its only stock in trade, it is the standard literature of an enormous class, who must find their reading in a newspaper, or they will not read at all; so long must its odium be upon the country's head, and so long must the evil it works be plainly visible in the Republic.

To those who are accustomed to the leading English journals, or to the respectable journals of the Continent of Europe; to those who are accustomed to anything else in print and paper; it would be impossible, without an amount of extract for which I have neither space nor inclination, to convey an adequate idea of this frightful engine in America. But if any man desire confirmation of my statement on this head, let him repair to any place in this city of London, where scattered numbers of these publications are to be found; and there let him form his own opinion.[1]

It would be well, there can be no doubt, for the American people as a whole, if they loved the Real less, and the Ideal somewhat more. It would be well, if there were greater encouragement to lightness of heart and gaiety, and a wider cultivation of what is beautiful, without being eminently and directly useful. But here, I think the general remonstrance, "we are a new country," which is so often advanced as an excuse for defects which are quite unjustifiable, as being of right only the slow growth of an old one, may be very reasonably urged; and I yet hope to hear of there being some other national amusement in the United States besides newspaper politics.

They certainly are not a humorous people, and their temperament always impressed me as being of a dull and gloomy

[1] NOTE TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION. — Or let him refer to an able, and perfectly truthful article, in *The Foreign Quarterly Review*, published in the present month of October; to which my attention has been attracted, since these sheets have been passing through the press. He will find some specimens there, by no means remarkable to any man who has been in America, but sufficiently striking to one who has not.

character. In shrewdness of remark, and a certain cast-iron quaintness, the Yankees, or people of New England, unquestionably take the lead; as they do in most other evidences of intelligence. But in travelling about, out of the large cities — as I have remarked in former parts of these volumes — I was quite oppressed by the prevailing seriousness and melancholy air of business: which was so general and unvarying, that at every new town I came to I seemed to meet the very same people whom I had left behind me at the last. Such defects as are perceptible in the national manners seem, to me, to be referable in a great degree to this cause; which has generated a dull, sullen persistence in coarse usages, and rejected the graces of life as undeserving of attention. There is no doubt that Washington, who was always most scrupulous and exact on points of ceremony, perceived the tendency towards this mistake, even in his time, and did his utmost to correct it.

I cannot hold with other writers on these subjects that the prevalence of various forms of dissent in America is in any way attributable to the non-existence there of an established church: indeed, I think the temper of the people, if it admitted of such an Institution being founded amongst them, would lead them to desert it, as a matter of course, merely because it *was* established. But, supposing it to exist, I doubt its probable efficacy in summoning the wandering sheep to one great fold, simply because of the immense amount of dissent which prevails at home; and because I do not find in America any one form of religion with which we in Europe, or even in England, are unacquainted. Dissenters resort thither in great numbers, as other people do, simply because it is a land of resort; and great settlements of them are founded, because ground can be purchased, and towns and villages reared, where there were none of the human creation before. But even the Shakers emigrated from England; our country is not unknown to Mr. Joseph Smith, the apostle of Mormonism, or to his benighted disciples; I have beheld religious scenes myself in some of our populous towns which can hardly be surpassed by an American camp-meeting; and I am not aware that any instance of superstitious imposture on the one hand, and superstitious credulity on the other, has had its origin in the United States, which we cannot more than parallel by the precedents of Mrs. Southcote, Mary Tofts the rabbit-breeder, or even

Mr. Thom of Canterbury — which latter case arose some time after the dark ages had passed away.

The Republican Institutions of America undoubtedly lead the people to assert their self-respect and their equality; but a traveller is bound to bear those Institutions in his mind, and not hastily to resent the near approach of a class of strangers, who at home would keep aloof. This characteristic, when it was tinctured with no foolish pride, and stopped short of no honest service, never offended me; and I very seldom, if ever, experienced its rude or unbecoming display. Once or twice it was comically developed, as in the following case; but this was an amusing incident, and not the rule or near it.

I wanted a pair of boots at a certain town, for I had none to travel in but those with the memorable cork soles, which were much too hot for the fiery decks of a steamboat. I therefore sent a message to an artist in boots, importing, with my compliments, that I should be happy to see him, if he would do me the polite favour to call. He very kindly returned for answer, that he would "look round" at six o'clock that evening.

I was lying on the sofa with a book and a wine-glass, at about that time, when the door opened, and a gentleman in a stiff cravat, within a year or two on either side of thirty, entered, in his hat and gloves; walked up to the looking-glass; arranged his hair; took off his gloves; slowly produced a measure from the uttermost depths of his coat-pocket; and requested me, in a languid tone, to "unfix" my straps. I complied, but looked with some curiosity at his hat, which was still upon his head. It might have been that, or it might have been the heat — but he took it off. Then he sat himself down on a chair opposite to me; rested an arm on each knee; and, leaning forward very much, took from the ground, by a great effort, the specimen of metropolitan workmanship which I had just pulled off, whistling pleasantly, as he did so. He turned it over and over; surveyed it with a contempt which no language can express; and inquired if I wished him to fix me a boot like *that*? I courteously replied, that provided the boots were large enough, I would leave the rest to him; that if convenient and practicable, I should not object to their bearing some resemblance to the model then before him; but that I would be entirely guided by, and would beg to leave the whole

subject to, his judgment and discretion. "You ain't partickler about this scoop in the heel I suppose, then?" says he; "we don't foller that here." I repeated my last observation. He looked at himself in the glass again; went closer to it to dash a grain or two of dust out of the corner of his eye; and settled his cravat. All this time my leg and foot were in the air. "Nearly ready, sir?" I inquired. "Well, pretty nigh," he said; "keep steady." I kept as steady as I could, both in foot and face; and having by this time got the dust out, and found his pencil-case, he measured me, and made the necessary notes. When he had finished, he fell into his old attitude, and taking up the boot again, mused for some time. "And this," he said at last, "is an English boot, is it! This is a London boot, eh?" "That, sir," I replied, "is a London boot." He mused over it again, after the manner of Hamlet with Yorick's skull; nodded his head, as who should say, "I pity the Institutions that led to the production of this boot!" rose, put up his pencil, notes, and paper — glancing at himself in the glass all the time — put on his hat; drew on his gloves very slowly; and finally walked out. When he had been gone about a minute, the door reopened, and his hat and his head reappeared. He looked round the room, and at the boot again, which was still lying on the floor; appeared thoughtful for a minute; and then said, "Well, good arternoon." "Good afternoon, sir," said I; and that was the end of the interview.

There is but one other head on which I wish to offer a remark; and that has reference to the public health. In so vast a country, where there are thousands of millions of acres of land yet unsettled and uncleared, and on every rood of which, vegetable decomposition is annually taking place; where there are so many great rivers, and such opposite varieties of climate; there cannot fail to be a great amount of sickness at certain seasons. But I may venture to say, after conversing with many members of the medical profession in America, that I am not singular in the opinion that much of the disease which does prevail, might be avoided, if a few common precautions were observed. Greater means of personal cleanliness are indispensable to this end; the custom of hastily swallowing large quantities of animal food, three times a day, and rushing back to sedentary pursuits after each meal, must be changed; the gentler sex must go more wisely clad, and take

more healthful exercise; and in the latter clause, the males must be included also. Above all, in public institutions, and throughout the whole of every town and city, the system of ventilation, and drainage, and removal of impurities requires to be thoroughly revised. There is no local Legislature in America which may not study Mr. Chadwick's excellent Report upon the Sanitary Condition of our Labouring Classes with immense advantage.

I have now arrived at the close of this book. I have little reason to believe, from certain warnings I have had since I returned to England, that it will be tenderly or favourably received by the American people; and as I have written the Truth in relation to the mass of those who form their judgments and express their opinions, it will be seen that I have no desire to court, by any adventitious means, the popular applause.

It is enough for me to know that what I have set down in these pages cannot cost me a single friend on the other side of the Atlantic, who is, in anything, deserving of the name. For the rest, I put my trust implicitly in the spirit in which they have been conceived and penned; and I can bide my time.

I have made no reference to my reception, nor have I suffered it to influence me in what I have written; for, in either case, I should have offered but a sorry acknowledgment, compared with that I bear within my breast, towards those partial readers of my former books, across the Water, who met me with an open hand, and not with one that closed upon an iron muzzle.

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